T/SOR/3/8/8/1

REFUSE AND RESIST.

NEWS FROM LOCAL ANTI-POLL TAX GROUPS

NO.1 PRICE: BY DONATION October/November 1989.

FORCE COUNCILS

NOT TO PURSUE REFUSERS!

DETERMINED OPPOSITION CAN STOP WARRANT SALES

By: Cllr. Margaret Dick.

Within the last fortnight, the Solicitor to the Regional Council has clarified that the non-payment recovery attempts will be:

1. **Attempt to negotiate payment.**
2. **Arrest if possible.**
3. **Threaten poinding.**
4. **Execute poinding.**

With even the **minimum** of determination on the part of non-payers, these tasks would be impossible.

Imagine, for example, if even 10,000 people invited the Sheriff Officers to individual meetings to **'negotiate'** an agreed payment! And if the entire 1 million non-payers asked for a meeting.....

Similarly with arrestment of wages - the task of finding out who had a job, who the employer was and arranging an arrestment make the task unenforceable.

Finally, the **'threat'** of poinding and a subsequent warrant sale remains an empty threat - since the steps involved (i.e. having to make an appointment, having to make a second visit if no-one is at home, having to face an appeal against any evaluation, etc) make the Sheriff Officers job one which would take decades to carry out!

One Glaswegian in every 3 has not paid a penny in Poll Tax - many more will join when they see who is winning.

The campaign of threats is intended to frighten people into payment.

The more people see through empty threats, the more they organise to frustrate collection, the more certain is the defeat of the Poll Tax.

LOBBY REGIONAL COUNCIL

Over 1,000 people gathered in George Square [Oct. 2nd] to join a march and lobby called by Strathclyde A.P.T. Federation. Groups from all over Strathclyde were represented giving themselves the opportunity to voice their anger over the Poll Tax and especially Warrant Sales. People joined the march as it made its way through the streets, demonstrating the Federation's ability to mobilise large numbers of people, when needed.

It was important to show Strathclyde Regional Council the strength of the non payment campaign. Especially as that day Labour councillors were taking a decision whether or not to pursue non payers through the use of warrant sales. We arrived in numerical strength detemined that the Labour councillors use of scare tactics and bully boy measures will not be tolerated by the people who put them in office.

OFF THE HOOK

The Police had the building well secured and we were instructed by the Region that a delegation of two people from each Ward *"would be allowed"* to see their Councillor. Sadly none of the Councillors appeared to be in at the time. As we learned later most of them had sneaked in the back entrance to avoid the angry crowd. While people were going in as delegations the Federation announced that a meeting would take place in the Moir Hall at the same time as the fate of non payers in Strathclyde was being decided. The focus of the activity then moved on to the Moir Hall where a number of speakers addressed the demonstrators. *Why have this meeting at the same time as the Councillors have theirs?*

Paul [*Possil A.P.T.*]

LONDON POLL TAX CONFERENCE

On Sunday the 3rd of September delegates from 49 different anti-poll tax groups and Federations from all across the country attended a conference in London. It was organised by the London Federation of Anti-Poll Tax Groups with the aim to develop **"genuine countrywide links and organisation"**. However, it was recognised from the start that a full conference of A.P.T.U.'s is needed in the near future and that this meeting would sanction such a gathering.

The conference on Sunday began with a speaker from the Central Federation in Scotland. (Brian Slocock **from Stirling**)

In his speech he emphasised that the Poll-Tax movement was the popular, working class one; indeed one of the most important revolts in recent history. In Stirling 50-80% of people, according to canvassing done, in working class areas, were not paying. In Scotland at least 20.4% have not paid a penny and our movement is getting stronger every day.

However, although there exists some form of organisation, not even 1% of the non-payers are involved in the organised forms of the struggle. It is the job of the Anti Poll Tax Groups to increase this involvement, so a **true** mass movement can occur that can force a solution to the poll tax onto the state.

The speaker finished by re-emphasising that the movement was one of ordinary people, with no **"extraordinary"** leaders or elites involved.

SPIRIT OF RESISTANCE

After the speech, a general discussion on how to defect the tax began. In general these involved **[1] The need to organise effective Anti-Poll Tax Groups and Federations in the community; [2] the need to get workers involved, either through trade union affiliation or workplace A.P.T.U.'s.; and [3] from Edinburgh, the need to organise regular occupations of local government offices to make it [local government] unworkable.**

However, also mentioned from delegates all across the country was how a political party (Militant) was using the Anti-Poll Tax fight for its own purposes and taking over any Federations it can. One speaker from Lothian called them the **"the bane of the movement"** and reported that the Conference was not mentioned in any of the Scottish Federations conference notes. The speaker said he was not being sectarian, but warning of what had happened in Scotland.

All through the morning session reports of Anti-Poll Tax events coming up were read out. The fight in England and Wales is very active and is organised.

The Conference agreed the following points: **[1] To support the All-British Conference on** 25th November. **[2] To organise a 2-day Conference [with workshops] in the winter [but not competing with the 25th one]; [3] A 4 person Steering Committee elected to try, firstly, to work jointly with the Militant dominated All-British Steering Committee and, if that failed, to organise the above Conference.**

DIRECT ACTION

150 Anti Poll Tax protestors from the Lothian Federation and other groups demonstrated at Lothian Regional Council Chambers in Edinburgh on September 20th.

Amidst angry heckling the ruling Labour Group pronounced that they *would* collect the poll tax, and could not rule out warrant sales. Two dissident Labour councillors argued for non-collection, while a weaker S.N.P. motion opposed warrant sales.

Shortly before the vote the Chair adjourned the meeting, falsely claiming there was too much noise. This maneouvre was designed to pre-empt the demonstrators' planned occupation.

Nevertheless, around 40 protestors took over the Council Chambers. Following discussion, the demonstrators then invaded the Poll Tax Payment Office in the adjoining Council H.Q. For 1½ hours protestors talked to staff and public, leafleted, festooned the walls with posters and periodically blocked the office entrance.

Another occupation is planned for the re-convened Council meeting on October 3rd.

POSTSCRIPT TUESDAY 3RD OCTOBER

BBC & STV covered the disruption of the Lothian Council Meeting which confirmed Council policy not to rule out Poindings and Warrant Sales. Only two Councillors, Keith Simpson and Anne Aylett opposed their possible use on principle. The Anti-Poll Tax activists (from as far afield as Muirhouse and Prestonfield) were ejected but went on to blockade a Post Office van loading 'reminder' letters from the Regional Council. After further Police intervention, the group then took over the Payment Office on George IV Bridge and had a further dialogue with staff. No arrests were made despite refusing to leave when the Police threatened arrests.

Mike [**Stockbridge A.P.T.**]

STREET ORGANISERS

Poll Tax Registration is being fought by public bonfires and saturation anti poll tax material. In Tottenham, 30% have not returned the form, [rising to 95% in the Broadwater Farm Estate!] They have 70 street reps., 30 workplace reps., and 9 local Ward groups federated. More areas are reporting similar levels of self organisation and mobilisation.

In Bristol and Avon, in addition to having a Federation with over 18 groups, there is liaison through inter-group special commissions dealing with: a 24 hour 'Hotline', an Information Bank, a Newsletter, New Group Support Team, Language Translation etc. Local groups are also setting up street-groups.

One problem is the existence of duplicate networks and Federations in a number of areas and some obstruction to their merger. In London, Cardiff and Manchester this is a problem.

Info: **London Federation A.P.T. Newsletter**

POLL TAX JOB FAIR

An interesting development in Labour's fight against the poll tax was announced last week. At the national meeting of anti-poll tax groups on Sunday, the 3rd of September it was discovered that Lewisham Council was organising a poll-tax JOBS FAIR for the 4th.

This jobs fair is just the last in a long line of sell outs by our **"elected representatives"**. In Lewisham the local A.P.T.U. organised against the jobs fair. All over the country, groups have formed which proclaim **"we're not paying the poll tax"**.

The delegates came from all over Scotland, London, North and South England. The All-British Steering Committee has refused to work with this group, which shows that they are not willing to work equally with an elected council from an Anti-Poll Tax conference.

The Conference was a good step forward in the Anti-Poll Tax struggle. Any direct links and discussions can only be for the better. We look forward to more initiatives like this.

Ian [**Woodlands A.P.T.**]

STREETCRED

Ibrox/Cessnock Against the Poll Tax held a Saturday meeting on September 9th. Although the response was disappointing a wideranging discussion took place involving local members and invited speakers, Janette McGinn from Spittal and Drew McEwan from Govanhill A.P.T.

More encouraging is the response to our regular street stall in Paisley Road West. A good rapport exists with the many local people refusing to pay. The stall gives information and bolsters confidence to carry on the fight. A **Task Force'** is being recruited to combat poindings and warrant sales, with 100 volunteers so far. A midweek stall is now also planned to start.

Pressure is being applied on the Regional Councillor (Helen McElhone) not to sanction warrant sales, although some residents are covered by Govan or Kingston Councillors. The M.P., Jim Sillars, continues to support the group.

Keith [**Ibrox**/Cessnock A.P.T.).

REFUSAL FIGURES

'Labour Research' [October 1989] reports the following 'official' regional levels of non-payment:

Western Isles 48%; Shetlands 40 - 54%•; Orkneys 33%; Strathclyde 20% - 30%•; Central 20% - 30%•; Highlands 22%; Lothian 20% - 28%•; Tayside 19% - 20%•; Fife 15%; Grampian 15%; Dumfries & Galloway 15%; Borders 6%.

[•Federation estimates including missed out people etc.]

In Shetlands, an organised Campaign led by Margaret Gear of Shetlands Community Residents Against the Poll Tax says the local response is **"fantastic"**. Even where organised Campaigns have been absent (except in places the SNP) other Highland areas have shown high levels of refusal to pay.

HQ OCCUPIED

BARRHEAD POINDING
REGIONAL COUNCIL OCCUPATION

Last month the second attempt by Strathclyde Regional Council to poind the household goods of an anti-poll tax activist, Philip Traish, was once again thwarted by grass roots opposition. At the eleventh hour the Sheriff Officers were forced to call off the poinding wary of the response they might provoke in the local community.

Around 200 Strathclyde Anti-Poll Tax activists gathered outside the house prepared to physically resist the Sheriff Officers if necessary. When informed of the unwillingness of the Sheriff Officers to appear we decided to go direct to Regional Headquarters and demand that the Council withdrew any threats of Poindings and Warrant Sales of non-payers household articles. Despite the security guards attempts to keep us out we were able to take control of a section of the building for three hours. A spontaneous occupation by 150 people of the Council Debates Chamber then took place.

We immediately addressed the call to the Deputy Leader, Bob Gould, to address the Lobby. Instead we got the Councils answer to **Henry Kissinger**, well known Govan Bullshitter, **Ian Davidson**, who as usual was trying to find a 'compromise'. This entailed a delegation to meet Gould and the other Councillors but was immediately thrown out by the vast majority of those present. **"We are the delegation"** shouted the crowd of 150.

A Debate then started among us as to what our next step should be. The arguments then ranged from barricading doors and resisting arrest to an orderly retreat with no resistance being offered. In the end the latter won but not without a significant minority having voiced their opposition. **The 'Public image' of the Federation and the possible slant that the media might take [what's new?] was deemed more important than to build a massive demonstration outside in support of the occupation.**

Paul [**Possil A.P.T.**]

GROUP SHORTS

SPRING FED

The Springburn Anti-Poll Tax Federation was set up to encourage co-operation between groups fighting in the campaign of non-payment, non-collection. The aim of the Federation is to pull resources in order to combat warrant sales and poindings, to lobby M.P.'s and Councillors in the north of city, and most important of all to spread the ideas of non-payment, non-collection, into areas which up till now have not joined the Campaign.

We began with the involvement of three groups - Haghill A.P.T.U., Dennistoun A.P.T.U. and Sighthill A.P.T.U. Our first joint involvement in the Campaign was to organise a feeder march to the June 24th Demo in Kelvingrove Park, but this was only a side issue to the main work we wished to tackle.

BIGHEADS!

"On the Poll Tax, we are the only tendency prepared to wage a struggle. Without 'Militant' there would have been probably 100,000 refusing to pay the poll tax in Scotland."

Militant 29th Sept. 1989.

NEW GROUPS

In the four months that the Federation has been in operation four more Unions have joined Woodlands, Keppochhill, Possil and Barmulloch College. The latter two of these being set up after Public Meetings being called by the Springburn Fed. The Possil meeting attracted over a hundred people; the meeting was addressed by Tommy Sheridan, Secretary of the Strathclyde Anti-Poll Tax Federation.

Work is being continued. We are working on setting up Unions in the Red Road, and Lambhill/Milton areas of the city. What we have learned in the last few months is that links must be forged between all groups who wish to fight the Poll Tax. The old saying rings true if we are to defeat the Poll Tax **"Unity is strength" We must fight together.**

In conclusion it has to be said that the Springburn Anti-Poll Tax Federation is an Ad-Hoc Body, whose only role is to give direction to the struggle in the north of the city. **The next action we will be taking will be a lobby of Michael Martin M.P. for Springburn at Whitehill School, Dennistoun, on Friday 13th 'october. All groups and individuals are welcome to come and give support to this lobby. Stick together and we will win.**

P.S. The Springburn Fed. would like to thank the Woodlands Anti-Poll Tax Union for their cash support.

George [**Sighthill A.P.T.**]

P.S. Tell that to the 48% refusing in the Western Isles.

PAPER SALE

A Paper sale of the "Voice of the Anti Poll Tax Federation", the Pay No Poll Tax News was held outside the Poll Tax Office in John Street on Friday 28th September. The object of the sale was to encourage those who were going in to pay, not to pay.

70 Papers were sold, but more importantly almost twenty people decided after the intervention of paper sellers that they would stop paying and stand firm with the Campaign of non payment.

This Paper Sale should be a regular event, but will not work if Groups do not send people down to support the Sale. People should be there to show reluctant payers that we can offer them the necessary strength and support to stop paying.

Next Sale: Contact Strathclyde Anti-Poll Tax Office, 12 Renfield Street.

George [**Sighthill A.P.T.**]

OPEN & DIRECT

Ibrox-Cessnock A.P.T. has submitted a Resolution to the Strathclyde Federation requesting.

That the Federation compiles and publishes a List detailing.

The name of each Anti Poll Tax Group;
The Secretary and another Office Bearer as Contact Persons;
Lists the contact address and telephone numbers;
& lists the time and place of Open Committee Meetings.

In conjunction with this, the list is made available to all affiliated Anti Poll Tax Groups via their respective Secretary.

All area Federations in Great Britain, and asks each, Area Federation to provide lists of their affiliated local Anti Poll Tax Groups.

Local groups in Strathclyde to be able, therefore, to 'twin' with local groups down south, thus furthering direct contact and a sense of common purpose.

- The group believes that direct contact can ease the pressure on the Executive and strengthen direct links throughout the country.
- If groups would like a copy of a national network list of Anti Poll Tax Groups compiled by the London Federation, send a stamped addressed envelope to us.

EDITORIAL

REFUSE AND RESIST has been launched by a group of anti-Poll Tax campaigners who realised not only that the press and broadcasting media are giving inadequate coverage of the campaign, but that there is inadequate communication between the various Anti-Poll Tax groups within Strathclyde.

While other areas have publications that keep abreast of local activities, and despite the existence of the Anti Poll Tax Federation, few community groups in Strathclyde have any knowledge of activities in other districts or any experience of working with other groups.

REFUSE AND RESIST aims to forge links between groups and encourage wider involvement in the campaign by:

a] publicising meetings, poindings, lobbies, demos and fund-raising activities.
b] providing a forum for debate about the policies and direction of the campaign.
c] providing information that is not biased by party politics.

With the recent publication of the 'Strathclyde Federation's PAY NO POLL TAX NEWS it may be argued that there is no need for REFUSE AND RESIST. But, while any paper that gives information about the campaign is to be welcomed, it is doubtful that PAY NO POLL TAX NEWS will give sufficient coverage of grass root activities or provide a forum for open debate.

As a free paper, REFUSE AND RESIST exists to provide a service to all anti-Poll Tax groups, large or small. Use it to advertise meetings and local events. Use it to report the success of your group's activities [or lack of it]. Use it to debate the issues raised by the Poll Tax and to discuss the campaign against it. If no-one in your group feels able to write reports, give us the details and the editorial team will write the article.

REFUSE AND RESIST will publish relevant news items, articles, letters and advertisements without cencorship. The only restriction on publication will be a lack of space. This first issue was produced with the financial assistance of several Glasgow groups. The size of future issues, and the number of copies printed, will depend on the generosity of concerned individuals and groups. If you support the aims of REFUSE AND RESIST, ask your group to give financial support. Any donation - no matter how small - will help ensure the future of REFUSE AND RESIST:

Margaret [Pollokshields]

CONTACTS:

All articles, letters and donations to:-

Refuse and Resist,
2/3, 182 Ark Lane,
Glasgow G31 2JS

or

Refuse and Resist,
c/o Murray,
31 Leven St.,
Glasgow G41 2JD

Final copy date for the Dec/Jan issue is 27th November. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made out to REFUSE AND RESIST.

STOP PRESS: For last minute information or details of events requiring coverage by the editorial team call - 041 423 8679 or 427 6398

TRANSLATE REFUSE & RESIST INTO ANY MINORITY LANGUAGES. NO COPYRIGHT. COST: P40-[illegible] US DOING THIS.

Anti-Poll Tax Meetings | Open to Local Residents

To have your Group listed here, write in to REFUSE & RESIST.

BARMULLOCH COLLEGE APT: 1.00 p.m. once a week, Barmulloch College.

DENNISTOUN APT. contact 2/3, 182 Ark Lane for details.

GOVAN: Contact J. Foster, 445 Govan Rd. for details of Meetings.

IBROX- CESSNOCK: Monday fortnightly at Whitefield Rd. Community Hall (from Oct. 30th). Secretary, D. Mackay, 32 Midlock St. G51

POLLOKSHIELDS APT: 8p.m. last Wednesday of month., PDA Hall, McCulloch St. Contact 429 0336 or 423 8679

POSSIL APT: 7 p.m. every Wed. Fossil Community Council Flat, Sunnylaw St. Contact Angela McCormack 336 5359

SPRINGBURN FEDERATION: 7.30 p.m. every second Monday, 49 Fountainwell Terr. 4th floor "49 Asso." Sighthill.

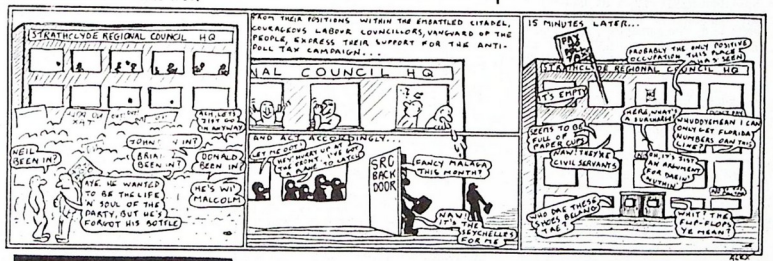
WOODLANDS AGAINST THE POLL TAX

Woodlands against the Poll-tax has been in existence for about 18 months. During that time we have constantly organised and fought against the tax.

We meet every Tuesday at 7 pm at the Woodlands Trust office at 7 Lynedoch Street in Woodlands. The meetings are open to all who want to get involved, so please feel free to drop in. As well as our meetings we have a weekly stall in Great Western Road at the Co-op where we provide information and leaflet passers-by.

GOVAN DEMONSTRATION AGAINST POLL TAX FOR 22 OCTOBER

Community organisations in Govan are being asked to support demonstrations through the streets of Govan on Sunday, 22 October. It is planned to hold a rally in Elderpark and to provide entertainment in the Pearce Institute. The demonstration will assemble at Govan Cross and march off at 12 noon.



STOP PRESS

FED VICTORY LATEST RESULT

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Thursday 12 Oct. Over 50 Anti- Poll Tax Protestors occupied the offices of Gray Scot & Co. (Sheriff Officers) Jamaica Street, Glasgow.

The occupation organised by the Strathclyde Anti-Poll Tax Federation came about as a result of a poinding which took place in the home of Jean Patton, Black Court, Paisley.

The demand was that the occupation would continue until the threat of a warrant sale against Mrs Patton was lifted. After three hours in the offices of "The Sheriff's men" they decided to drop their action against Mrs Patton and thus put the ball back into the court of the Council.

What was shown by this action was that when the Federation go on the offensive we get results.

Paul (Possil)

T/502/3/5/5/1

REFUSE AND RESIST.

NEWS FROM LOCAL ANTI-POLL TAX GROUPS

No. 4 PRICE. BY DONATION June/July '90

VIOLENCE? WHAT VIOLENCE?

Much has been said and written over the last few months about the events of the anti-Poll Tax demo in London. But the glare of the media boys seems to have missed another major event that took place on March 31st. The event in question is the anti-Poll Tax demo on the streets of Glasgow.

45,000 people from all over Scotland took to the streets to show the Tories, the Councils, and the Sheriff Officers, that the people of Scotland (1.5 million not paid) won't stand for the Poll Tax or the collection procedure that comes with it.

Some people have pointed out that the Glasgow demo was peaceful and, to some extent, this is true. But, while we never had working class people having to defend themselves against the violence of the state, there were a number of incidents which seem to have escaped the notice of Campaign leaders. Maybe they just slipped someone's mind.

1. Before the demo took place the control of the event was handed over to the police, we can, and should, steward our own demos. **2.** Before, and as the demo moved off, people were herded out of George Square by both Federation stewards and mounted police. This provoked anger among many demonstrators.

3. When we take to the streets in protest we shouldn't let the police split our ranks, yet the organisers calmly allowed the police to split the demo into three sections. This almost resulted in a mini-riot at the railway bridge in Ballater St., when the Edinburgh groups were split by mounted police. Several demonstrators demanded that stewards use their walkie-talkies to ask the demo leaders to stop until the march was re-united, but the stewards were more concerned with making demonstrators go along with police demands. After a tense period of confrontation, those who were being held back, broke through to re-group and it was only because of their lack of numbers that the police backed down.

4. Threats of violence were aimed at an R & R distributor on the demo by some members of Mil...ooops! sorry, Castlemilk APTU. **5.** The most disturbing incident of the day was when Jack Harvey (Assistant Secretary of the Strathclyde Fed. AND the chief steward of the march) was slashed at the rally in Queen's Park. Thankfully, Jack was not too badly injured, but we should have been able to ensure the safety of those who were on the demo, including the chief steward.

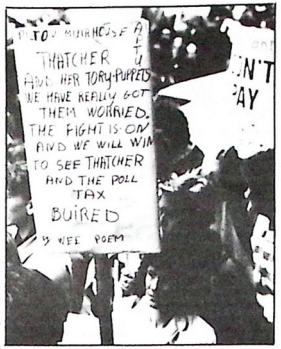
These incidents should never have happened. We can't allow the police to control, or take part in deciding, what actions we take. After all, they are only workers in uniform (Ho, ho, ho, I don't think).

Threats of violence, and acts of violence at the Glasgow demo, have not been condemned by the Federation leadership. Perhaps the perpetrators of violence were in the wrong organisation (or right one, depending on where you stand) to be condemned. But if violence is to play any part in our campaign, it should be aimed at our enemies, not our friends.

I would ask that double standards don't apply. I can, and will, support those who defend themselves against the violence of the state, before supporting those who intimidate and attack members of their own class.

FIND OUT WHO YOUR REAL ENEMY IS. STAND UP AND DO THE RIGHT THING.

(KIDDER)



HERE WE GO

Resistance to the Poll Tax is winning out. The levels of non-payment and the massive difficulty of collecting unpaid tax for over 15 months is causing major problems for the Tory government and Regional Councils.

The Councils have passed over ¾ million names to Sheriff Officers. But this has remained largely an empty threat. Unable to massage and disguise the figures any longer, the limited use of Sheriff Officers in Grampian and Lothians have not made much impact on the high levels of defiance.

In Strathclyde we have had false alarms in Foxbar and Dumbarton, and incidents in Barrhead and Lanarkshire, but the dozen or so firms of Sheriff Officers don't seem to know where to start. With occupation of at least 5 firms we have realised that attack is the best form of defence and forced Sheriff Officers to consider sticking to '4 Day Warning Notices' or risk further direct action against them. Maybe they're negotiating 'Danger Money'! In Edinburgh and the Lothians, the first wave of attempted poindings has ground to a halt, with less than 10% success for the Sheriff Officers and the Council changing the amount they pay firms like Love & Co. to performance based results.

Cont. p11

11 held in search for rioters

Eleven people suspected of being involved in the Trafalgar Square anti-poll tax riot were arrested by police during a series of dawn raids on a housing estate in Stamford Hill, north London.

During the raid, doors were broken down and fittings and furniture smashed. Police carried search warrants entitling them to remove clothing and correspondence. Three people were later charged with violent disorder.

The operation in London, in which at least one man was injured, was described by the Trafalgar Square Defendants' Campaign as an "aggressive fishing expedition".

In one flat, police sprayed a dog with a gas cannister, according to a witness. Another described police in plain clothes moving on to an estate with hatchets slung over their shoulders.

Scotland Yard at first said that those arrested were anarchists and supporters of animal rights groups living in eight squats in Hackney and Stoke Newington, north London.

Later, a spokesman said six were being questioned about the riot and five about stolen goods.

He was unable to explain the reference to animal rights groups and denied that any of the 11 were suspected of taking part in recent bomb attacks by the Animal Liberation Front.

Five of the premises are on the Holmleigh Road estate in Stamford Hill, north London. Residents denied they were squats, although one block on the estate has been occupied by squatters for about four years.

GUARDIAN : Friday 22nd June 1990

EDITORIAL

When R & R sent two delegates to the recent Scottish Federation Conference, they were denied admission. The first excuse given was that the cheque for our Affiliation and delegation fees had not yet been cleared by the bank (12 days after Craig Beaton accepted it).

When Margaret Murray offered to pay cash, there was some consultation among Fereration (Militant) stewards and Executive members who came up with a new reason for barring us from the hall.

THE REFUSE & RESIST TEAM ARE NOT A BONA FIDE ANTI-POLL TAX GROUP!

What about the Trade Union affiliates? The Tenants' Association affiliates? etc. etc. What about our cheque? Why was it accepted? Why hasn't it been returned?

Come on Tommy, are you and your cronies so scared of open debate that you will turn the Federation into a sectarian organisation? Can't you accept the value of constructive criticism?

If the R & R team don't represent opposition to the Poll Tax, who does?

We watched and listened from the public gallery as an Edinburgh delegate tried to raise a point of order concerning our plight. She was booed and hissed from the floor, and interrupted by the platform. Is this the 'truly democratic' Federation in action? If so, we might as well go it alone, many of us already have.

We need the Militant notion of democracy as much as we need the Poll Tax.

Not Just Local!

Forming a support group to resist collection of the Poll Tax doesn't have to be confined to local community based groups.

The West Yorkshire Discussion Group, a Libertarian Socialist circle of writers for 'Here & Now' magazine, have just formed their own. This is in addition to 1 being a member of a hospital APT workplace group and 2 being involved in Armley APT. There is every expectation that the 'Free University of Glasgow' will also form such an interest based support network soon.

Contact F.U., Transmission, 28 King St. G1 5QP

MESSAGE FROM MANAGUA

THE GREAT ESCAPE

A number of people had to make a sharp exit from a recent occupation against benefit arrestments at a D.S.S. office. After the initial excitement of rushing in and barricading the place, two Militant full-timers called a meeting to begin negotiations. As time went by they stopped having meetings to decide what to do next and started negotiating with the police and then told everyone else what they had decided! The police were allowed into the occupation to make sure no damage was done. The staff could have done this. Some people were not prepared for the planned length of the occupation and had to leave early. The police, who had now checked all the barricades, and knew the number of people involved, insisted that everyone gave their name, address and date of birth before leaving. However, some people in this world don't see the point in giving these details to the police unless they have to. They left via a window. They may have even thought that the police are not neutral observers in the struggle against the poll tax, as the events in Trafalgar Square have clearly shown, but are there to serve the interests of the ruling class.

We can only hope that from now on Militant stick to their policy of not telling anti-poll tax groups they don't control, about planned occupations.

The One That Got Away (With a Few Others).

SHUT YOUR GOB . . . . OR LOSE YOUR JOB

This is the message that Hackney Council are conveying to their employees through the political victimisation of Andy Murphy. Although Andy was reinstated (to avoid a damaging 24 hour strike before the May elections) he still has the threat of being sacked for his political beliefs, hanging over him.

On 8th May he was issued with a Notice of Complaint which states, "By acting as a spokesperson for Class War Federation, you have brought the Council into disrepute. The published material directly associates you with, and supports, the aims and principles of that organisation which are incompatible with the responsibilities of the Council and its employees".

The Council is attempting to 'vet' the political views of its employees. This poses a grave threat to every single Council Worker and it must be fought at all costs!

GO SLOW AND APPEAL

The occupation at Anniesland and numerous pickets and lobbies at D.S.S. offices from Parkhead to Laurieston have taken place. CPSA low-grade D.S.S. and Dept. of Employment staff are being asked to 'go slow' or back up any workers victimised for not doing Income Support Arrestment work.

With the pressure of staff shortages amongst low-grade workers and growing computerisation and the introduction of new systems of payment, the CPSA has generally shown no enthusiasm to take on this extra workload. In Craigton D.S.S. for example, 1,000+ Arrestments for claimants in Pemlee, Cardonald, Corkerhill, Govan, Ibrox-Cessnock etc. lie untouched a month after the Region sent them on.

At the same time, some Managers and HEOs are denying that claimants have the Right of Appeal against the arrestment of £1.85 for single people and £2.90 for couples, both in default of their 1989/90 Poll Tax. Although the argument is technical and typically complex, Welfare Rights Workers have confirmed that a Right of Appeal exists linked to 'Overpayment' Regulations, even although the Arrestments will be seen as a type of Direct Payment.

If no Written Decision is issued, there is no time limit to the Right of Appeal. The main point of appealing is to clog up the system with thousands of appeals, and also insist on the reinstatement of any benefit arrested prior to an Appeal being lodged. Welfare Rights offices and a good Information or Advice Centre should be able to advise claimants, but it is likely that a 'Test Case' will emerge which will give a good indication if a particular ground for appeal is likely to delay Direct Payment Arrestments.

On a ranking system, the Poll Tax comes a poor fourth to Rent, other Housing Charges such as 'Heat with Rent' and fuel debts. Claimants with a total of £5.55 being recovered from their Income Support for other arrears cannot have the Poll Tax added on to this and their case would go back to the Region for a 'bad debt' write-off or sent on to the Sheriff Officers with the other 400,000 high mountain.

It appears that only a small fraction of people on Income Support who have failed or refused to pay their Poll Tax have, as yet, been identified by the Region, said to be only 7,000 initially. This means many people, including young people on £28.80 a week are being pursued for the full Poll Tax, because of technicalities about forms being returned between April-June 1989. Many other claimants in the private rented sector are also continually moving around and causing enormous problems of tracing Poll Tax debts.

Local Anti-Poll Tax groups are active in publicising claimants Right of Appeal - opposite Craigton D.S.S. on the 28th June at 12.15 a rally is organised aiming to attract CPSA workers and claimants alike, or, as in Parkhead and Edinburgh developing links between workers and activists in the hope that solidarity can delay or refuse to collect the Poll Tax in this way. People on Income Support need to be persuaded to stay active in the anti-Poll Tax fight and not see their Direct Payment Arrestment as separate and unrelated to those threatened with Poindings and Warrant Sales.

Keith (Ibrox-Cessnock)

HIGH NOON -for Sherriffs.

The anti poll tax movement defeated 3 attempts by the Sheriff Officers to carry out "mass poindings" in Edinburgh in April.

The Sheriffs men targetted 3 areas. Several non-payers in each neighbourhood received a letter fixing a date for a poinding and threatening that "If no-one is present on said date, the Warrant to enforce entry by breaking open, shut-lockfast places will, if necessary, be implemented".

On 10th April anti poll tax campaigners lay in wait for the Sheriff Officers at homes in the High St. area. The highlight of the day's resistance organised by Southside Against the Poll Tax - came when 200 people defended a non-payer's home by completely filling Paisley Close. Needless to say the Sheriffs didn't show.

The state thugs had put in an appearance earlier, at other homes, but the constant presence of protestors ensured that even when they gained access they were unable to poind a single item.

The following day saw Haymarket Tollcross Anti Poll Tax Campaign co-ordinating the defence of non-payers in the Grassmarket area. The Sheriff's "dawn strike" was to no avail - even when the Sheriffs had police backup some non-payers kept their doors locked and bolted in defiance.

At lunchtime the Grassmarket was chock a block with 200 protestors who excitedly charged this way and that at the slightest hint of a suspected Sheriff Officer! It was another total victory for the Sheriffbusters - not one poinding all day.

Stockbridge Show-Down

The Stockbridge and Comely Bank neighbourhoods were the scene for the next showdown. Over 17th-18th April 150 people were involved in defending 11 non-paying households. Being involved in Stockbridge New Town Anti Poll Tax Group I can describe what happened in some detail.

The successful two days physical defence of those non-payers homes was only possible because of our previous activity in the community. When, earlier this year, the Sheriff Officers had handdelivered threatening letters to local non-payers, our Group countered by flyposting STOP THE SHERIFF flyers, with our Hotline Phone Nos. We visited virtually everyone who rang with leaflets, advice etc.

The delivery of the "poinding" letters saw us repeat the flyposting and personal visits - together with an intensified advertising of our group meetings. Attendance leapt from 6-18 per fortnight to 25-30 weekly.

Around 15 non-payers from 11 households contacted us to say they had received "poinding date" letters. At our group meetings we had long thorough discussions about what we should do. Eventually it was unanimously agreed we would muster as many people as possible to stand guard at each non-payers home. 3,000 leaflets advertising the resistance were distributed to local homes and the call was put out to other groups in Lothian.

On the 17th we were in position at all 6 homes before 8 a.m. (the earliest (normal) legal times for a poinding). All homes were in 'phone contact, with one acting as a base. There were leaflets for passers-by, plus an information sheet listing the homes being defended, Sheriffs car registration numbers, a lawyer's telephone number, etc.....

Piled In

The Sheriff Officers made their move around 8.30 a.m. Several teams were involved. With one set seemingly acting as a decoy, 2 Sheriffs gained access to a flat in Cheyne St. But anti poll tax protestors piled in after them, and the Sheriffs were unable to poind anything.

By now protestors from the other flats - alerted by phone - were converging on Cheyne St. The Sheriff Officers ignored the other nearby flats due for poindings and made a rapid exit stage left! Frantic chases ensued as the Sheriffs fled with nonpayers in hot pursuit. The state bully boys soon left the area, some with their car aerials resembling a surreal modern sculpture! No more poindings were attempted.

That afternoon 100-150 people held an impromptu march round Stockbridge. This was a great success, drawing in passers-by and boosting morale sky-high. Our appetites whetted, we got stuck into the goodies at our "anti poll tax tea party" held outside some of the threatened homes.

Next day we successfully defended 5 homes. Sheriffs were sighted several times but our constant presence maintained right up to 8 p.m. - scared them off. Two days - not one poinding.

Poindings No More

Since then the Sheriff Officers have, as far as we know, issued no more such letters setting dates for poindings.

The successful organisation of these actions was carried out by the local anti poll tax groups - all 3 are "independent" non-party dominated groups - with significant solidarity from round Lothian. Neither the Lothian Federation Executive nor any political tendency played any organising role. (Perhaps this is why the 'Militant' Federation Secretary omitted all mention of these actions in his "report" of Lothian activity to the Scottish Federation Conference.)

3 lessons that could be drawn from these events:-

- Don't be content to just defend 2 or 3 committed non-payers against poindings. Do extensive publicity to draw in all the others you don't know about.

- Guard every non-payers home from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. The Sheriffs usually strike early.

- Be ready to take action such as a local march round the threatened homes. This helps us go on the offensive. Everyone in the area should know what's going on.

John Ball, Stockbridge New Town Anti Poll Tax Group, Edinburgh

Pressured To Campaign

17 Anti-Poll Tax protestors face "Breach of the Peace" charges on the 20th/21st and 22nd June at the Sheriff Court in the Lawnmarket.

Pressure by 8 of the accused has forced the Lothian Federation and 'Militant' supporters into joining a campaign to have the charges (during an occupation of Love & Co. Sheriff Officers) dropped.

Stymied by statements, such as "We're too busy" (Andy Clachars Vice-Chairperson, but himself one of the accused), a meeting has been arranged to organise the lobby of the court on the 3 days and involve the independent Anti-Poll Tax groups. Faced with this groundswell from below, Andy Clachars announced that a Federation poster had been commissioned and that all the 17 would join the united campaign to "Defend the 17".

Info. from Edinburgh R. & R. Contacts

POSSIL FIGHTS BACK

Possil APT occupied D. Bruce, Sheriff Officers (Glasgow), to demand assurance on notice of poinding and to clear up the position of those on income support. 230 people took over the office until our demands were met.

OCCUPATIONS WORK! Take action into your own hands.
Paul (Barmulloch College)

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John Ball, Stockbridge New Town Anti Poll Tax Group, Edinburgh

WHEN NO NEWS MAY BE GOOD NEWS!

(Courtesy of RED ACTION)

It was entirely predictable given that a precedent had already been set after Wapping, that the police would demand and be given access to all photographic and video film taken by journalists during the Poll Tax riot in Trafalgar square. This 'evidence' was, the police claimed, vital if they were to first identify, then arrest and prosecute the alleged 'ring leaders'.
It was also entirely predictable that while some sections of the media would offer the 'evidence' with unconcealed enthusiasm others like the *Guardian* or *Observer* would *refuse point* blank on principle *- until ordered to do so* in court. This was an entirely *proper protest* commented the presiding judge approvingly, as *the media* in *'a free country'* could not automatically be expected to become the "eyes and ears of the police" and in any case they had plenty of video and photographic evidence of their own.
The owners, editors and journalists of those publications that contested the order in court may indeed feel that honour has been satisfied, or in any case hope that such a token gesture will be sufficient in future to distinguish their journalists from those of the 'police sheets' such as the Star and the Sun that eagerly volunteered the information. If so, they are liable to be quickly disillusioned. For in the real world it will matter little who is subsequently jailed. Whether the photographic evidence supplied to the prosecution came from the impeccably principled Guardian or the propagandists of the Daily star on the rabid right.

The end result is the same. Both newspapers have supplied material to be sifted through by the police at their leisure; the police have been granted **all** the evidence which of course will be used selectively, in the sense that the police will select those photographs that in any subsequent court case **only** and exclusively are of benefit to the prosecution, similar contradictory evidence that might benefit a defendant can be trimmed, withheld or destroyed.
What makes matters worse is the fact that what they the reporters witnessed, was not a clash between pro- and anti-Poll Tax demonstrators, with the police there as the impartial neutral representatives of law and order, it was in fact a battle **between** the police and the *marchers*, following an attack *on the marchers* **by** the police.
Media hacks may in future seek refuge in the 'conspiracy theory' of their own making, that the riot was planned by groups such as Class War, which is laughable, or the SWP which if possible, is even more incredible. However, from eye-witness accounts, and the number of letters which ironically appeared in their own papers, there is some evidence that suggests such a conspiracy did indeed exist, that the riot was carefully planned and orchestrated by 'the enemies of democracy' not belonging to small and timid groups on the left, but instead to a cynical, powerful organisation on the right - the Metropolitan police.

THE MET

1. One hour before any trouble, large numbers of plain clothes police were seen to infiltrate the crowd.
2. The tactics employed outside Downing Street, first spliting the march in two, preventing thousands of people from reaching their destination naturally caused anger and confusion. Those that remonstrated or objected were imply attacked. Curiously, **exactly** the same tactic was used in 1984 during a large march in support of the miners with exactly the same result. Riot! Mass arrests! Media hysteria!
3. The police refused point blank, to change the route or the rallying point of the march to Hyde Park which would have avoided the potential 'flash points' such as the S. African Embassy in Trafalgar Square, or Downing Street on the route. Despite the 'rumours' of trouble surfacing in the press, the week before they informed the Anti-Poll Tax Federation that such a request would have to be denied as they required 7 days notice in writing! Perhaps it was just coincidence that in these 'flash point areas' where the police video and cameras were located that the worst violence occurred.
4. It was the police themselves that launched the first violent and unprovoked attack on the up to then completely peaceful crowd in Trafalgar Square. As the Home Secretary admitted in the House of Commons, the entirely legal assembly were not informed by the police that they wished to 'clear the area'. Neither were they at any time ordered or instructed to do so. There was no attempt at any verbal communication at all. So the use of violence or force was **not** used as a last resort; the police chose that method. It was done intentionally.
5. Despite police claims that the objective was to clear the area, thousands of marchers who had travelled to London from around the country and whose coaches were parked on the Embankment were physically prevented by the police from getting to them, and instead were forced back in the direction of the trouble. All the tube stations in the immediate area, Picadilly, Charing Cross, Waterloo, Leicester Square and for a radius of a couple of miles around were closed to the public.
6. Large and conspicuous mounds of bricks and masonry had been dumped for no apparent reason on the pavement in the Haymarket. This was the one and only exit-route from the Square chosen by the police for the demonstrators still coralled outside the National Portrait Gallery at about 6.30. The impromtu march which resulted from the evacuation was unescorted by any police at all, so predictably the whole area echoed to the sound of broken glass.

Apologists for the police say that all of this if true was as a result of 'inept policing'. If so, millions of pounds of rate payers money has been wasted in the riot control techniques the Met has been perfecting over the past 10 years.
At no time except perhaps for a short period around Trafalgar Square when both the Higgs and Hill offices and the S. African Embassy were on fire did the police 'appear' to have bitten off more than they could comfortably chew - where they were not in complete control of the situation. The repeated charges by mounted and insufficient numbers of riot police were never intended and could not dislodge the 2,000 strong section fighting back. If the intention was not to disperse them, it was only to provoke them. At the very height of the fighting, hundreds of police loitered seemingly unperturbed and unemployed in Whitehall. Everything was obviously under control, everything was evidently going to plan. It is for this reason that the entire media are culpable, because not one paper has to our knowledge sought to answer these questions; the questions themselves have not even been posed.
For them to then calmly hand over all visual evidence to the willing participants, if not the instigators of the riot, to help head-hunt those the police had pushed to a fight on the ground the police prepared and selected beforehand is to accept in advance of any inquiry the police version of events; that not only were they entirely blameless but that they 'acted with restraint'. Presumably they also accept that members of their own profession, journalists from the Daily Mail and Time magazine, victims of police agression, were either rioting at the time, are secret members of Class War, or that the injuries they suffered were self-inflicted.
Whatever the reason, whether it was due to a natural bias towards the police, self-censorship, or simply a case of collective funk, their response to all police pressure, undoubtedly means that in future, **all** representatives of the media will be regarded rightly as accomplices or potential accomplces of the police.
Because they are prepared to allow others to go to jail to avoid going to jail themselves (the probable result of defying the court) they have finally forfeited the last vestige of either integrity or independence.
On April 9th the Sun in its editorial, asked "why are some newspapers and TV companies reluctant to hand over Trafalgar Square riot pictures to Scotland yard? It is absurd to argue that photographers are in some way neutral observers. No-one is neutral in the satruggle against violence".

AGENT OF THE STATE?

The Sun has admitted that their employees are "the willing agents of the state." We the general public should be grateful for this unusual not to say unique display of honesty. Now we know exactly where they stand, they can expect at some future date to discover exactly where we stand. Where the Sun, Sky TV, the Daily Star etc volunteer, others are conscripted after only the most timid resistence, the end result being in any case the same.
During the battle in Trafalgar Square, there were a number of attacks on TV crws which were carried out by lone individuals and appeared quite spontaneous. There is little doubt that in the future these attacks may lose something of their spontaneity.
When this happens there will be no point in them screaming about 'freedom of the press', nor will anything be gained by searching police files for the perpetrators, when they need only look in the mirror to see those ultimately responsible.

STATE VIOLENCE

Trafalgar Square was just another violent episode that echoed many others in our recent history, the Miner's Strike, the Toxteth riot, Wapping, the Student Demo in 88. After each of these assaults on the general public (demonstrators are workers, students, husbands, wives, daughters, sons, in fact, the general public) more resources are made available to ensure that the Police Force are even better prepared for the next attack.

In the next few pages, some of those who witnessed and or were forced to defend themselves against the violence of the State on March 31st, recount their experiences.

It is not for nothing that the Tories have poured vast sums of public money into "improving" the Police Force. When they increase numbers and produce well-equipped, well-trained, riot squads, they know what they are doing — **and it is not fighting crime.**

The harder the rich stamp on the poor, the more likely the poor are to retaliate. The Tories are as well aware of this as they are aware of the affects that their policies are having on the underpaid and the unemployed. They are waging a war on the majority of the population. A war that is both economic and physical. And they have been doing so for the past eleven years.

3.00pm
Peaceful sit down protest outside gates to Downing Street, two hours after the march began. Police in full riot gear charge without warning and beat protestors (photo). Demonstrators respond and jostle with police. Still calm in square.

3.15pm
Police cordon off Whitehall to divert march via Embankment and Northumberland Avenue to Trafalgar Square.

Heavy handed treatment causes scuffles and confrontation.

3.45pm
Police seal off Whitehall and charge trapped demonstrators with mounted police.

3.55pm
Demonstrators trapped in Whitehall by police cordons escape through side streets to re-join the diverted march on Embankment and Northumberland Avenue.

'We were given no warning . . . The use of horses was indiscriminate, it was surprising no one was killed'

STUDENT DEMO 1988

4.05pm
Crush at Trafalgar Square end of Northumberland Avenue as police attempt to force marchers to enter the square three abreast.

4.15pm
Crush so intense that crowd begin to shout 'Hillsborough' to police

4.20pm
As rally ends, angry demonstrators focus on police causing crush at top of Northumberland Avenue and attempt to free demonstrators, many suffering crush injuries

4.25pm
Press photographers climb scaffolding on corner of Northumberland Avenue, followed by demonstrators who throw missiles on police blockade below. Police line breaks and charges away down Northumberland Avenue. Police drive van into crowd at speed supported by 10 officers in riot gear. Forced to retreat by angry crowd.

4.35pm
Previously peaceful, but now excited crowd, having freed the crushed demonstrators in Northumberland Avenue, turn attention on Whitehall, which is guarded by a police cordon.

4.40pm
Pushing and jostling, ordinary police retreat and riot police advance, batoning indiscriminately, to edge of Trafalgar Square.

4.45pm
Police vans on the Strand drive into crowd at speed. One demonstrator caught up by van and dragged 60 yards. Angry crowd then attacks the vans.

4.50pm
Mounted riot police charge from Whitehall through Trafalgar Square to St. Martin's Lane, batoning and trampling crowd. Followed by numerous further charges, many injuries. Police forays provide target for missiles.

5.00pm
Running battles in Trafalgar Square, as police baton demonstrators who respond by attacking police vehicles. Portakabins on scaffolding on one corner set alight.

5.00-6.00pm
Most coaches depart.

5.30pm
Police force demonstrators to the north side of Trafalgar Square with ferocious baton charges, and disperse them into the West End where sporadic rioting, fighting and looting continue for several hours.

THE AFTERMATH

Cont. pe.

It is total stupidity to say that the Poll Tax could be defeated by bricks and bottles alone. In fact, who would actually say that? The plain answer is no-one. Everyone involved in the struggle against the Poll Tax knows that it will only be defeated by mass non-payment across the country. But for mass non-payment to grow and develop, it must have a collective voice: that was the demonstration. And that's why the TUC and the Labour Party, despite all the pleas from Militant etc, were never going to organise a march against the Poll Tax. Because such a march would help to breakdown the crippling fear and isolation of much of the working class. Thus the demonstration and its development from that into a full-scale riot reflected the mood of many people, even those who did not actively participate in the riot. The mood was angry and defiant - it was not a mood of passivity, it was not a mood that was willing to listen to rhetoric from the platform and then go home happy. It was a mood of "fuck it, we've had enough". This is not a matter of "a tiny handful of anarchists" as both the popular and left papers have tried to portray it - this is a matter of a vast number of working class people. To deny that is to deny truth itself. For all the sickening lies of Militant, the fact is that a lot of their own members were ready to ruck and eagerly seized the opportunity to settle old scores and express their frustrations. The reason for this is that many of their members are ordinary working class people - not removed from reality bureaucrats, academics and other middle class professionals. A lot of people had a lot of anger that day.

The struggle against the Poll Tax, like all working class struggles, faces enormous problems and difficulties.One of the main problems that it faces is the control of all forms of media by the ruling class. This is not an absolute totalitarian control - such a policy would be counter-productive. It is a sophisticated and subtle policy that allows 'World In Action', Paul Foot in the 'Daily Mirror' and so on to give the illusion of freedom...but maintains a tight grip that ensures all media is dominated by bourgeois views, politics and opinions. If there had been no riot at the end of the demonstration, then it would have got no more than a few lines in the papers and a brief mention on the telly. Remember the Glasgow demonstration against the Poll Tax last year? Over 20,000 people were on it, a massive show of opposition that was quietly censored. Militant and their ilk complain about this and demand their right to be heard. We suffer from no such illusions and we do not seek to encourage such illusions within our class. But the media had to cover the riot - partly because they wanted to smear the mass movement, but also because it was so huge. So the demonstration and riot against the Poll Tax were spread across all front pages, on all news bulletins: no-one could now say that they did not know there was enormous and powerful opposition to the Poll Tax. And this, of course, can only help to build mass non-payment. All the isolated, worried, frightened people around the country would have taken great heart that they're not alone in their hatred of the Poll Tax and their desire to smash it into the ground. But Militant moan how the violence will "alienate" people from the struggl

Police violence

EYEWITNESS

mounted officers confront protesters off Whitehall.

At 2.55 all thoughts of going home vanished when someone shouted "Look over there". Mounted police could be seen pouring out of a side street half-way down Whitehall and charging into the marchers. The sight of the enemy attacking our demo had a dramatic effect on the crowd in the square and the mood changed from one of 'this is boring' to 'let's fucking get into them'!

In the two minutes it took us to get there, the mounted police had ridden off towards parliament leaving injured marchers behind them. The situation now was that almost all the police were behind crash barriers on the Downing Street side of Whitehall, while we controlled the other half of it. In the street which the cavalry had charged from, people were busy putting half the contents of a skip through the windows of a nearby government ministry while the rest was passed forward to keep the police at bay. A TV camera crew arrived at this point but were pushed away before they could film anyone.

By now, lines of riot police had moved up Whitehall and there was a stand-off. We didn't have enough ammo to drive them back and they didn't have the numbers (yet) to charge so many of us. What happened was that the two groups stood only feet apart and every now and then scuffles would break out and fighting would spread along the line. Police would try and snatch someone, or some brave souls would grab a riot sheild and drag the attatched copper into the mob. On both sides gruesome 'tug of wars' happened when an unfortunate cop or

rioter would be pulled too and fro by us and them until one side or the other gave up.

Injuries were happening: coppers kicked in or felled by missiles, and rioters hit by batons. Wheras wounded cops went to the rear, most bloodied demonstrators stayed in the crowd - this after all, was not one to be missed!

Gradually, as police numbers grew, they were able to push us back into Trafalgar Square. But as it turned out, this was a mistake. In Whitehall you had a relatively small 'front', but as the police line came into the square, more and more demonstrators were able to get at them. By now, Trafalgar Sq was completely in the hands of the marchers - all police had been withdrawn. This meant thathundreds of people were able to climb up scaffolding on a building opposite the South African embassy, giving them a good view of the fighting. Apparently the march organisers were using their P.A. system to tell everyone to go home - but the square was still totally crowded, so obviously no-one was listening!

At this point the police made their biggest mistake of the day. For some reason the left hand side of their line (as we looked at them) was ordered to charge into the square while those on the right remained motionless. As they went forward they got hit from three sides and the charge slowed in the hail of missiles. They never made contact

but still they didn't move up the other half of their line, and more cops were sent into the 'beach-head' and tried to push further forward. This just meant that yet more people had access to them and it brought them within range of the people on the scaffolding - poles, bolts and fire extinguishers rained down and it was here that most police injuries occurred.

with the crowd, who just opened up and let them in - then let them have it with anything to hand. Instead of retreating, the cops tried to form a sheild wall but were getting rapidly thinned out.

I was on the right hand side of the police (near Nelson's Column) and here we had very little to throw. People chucked what they could and the crowd roared when direct hits were scored. Those at the front were running towards the police and having to pick up missiles thrown by other sections of the crowd. Every now and then dazed and unconscious riot cops would be dragged from the fray. All we could do was cheer!

It was then that some bright spark on the scaffolding decided to set some portakabins alight (you must have seen this on the news). Then flames could be seen coming from the South African embassy. More cheers!

By now the action had moved past the embassy and up towards St Martins church. A cordon of 'ordinary' cops had formed in front of us and things were pretty quiet. One incident showed though that people here were still willing to have a go. A punk, who was totally pissed, picked up a rock and walked to within about three feet of the cordon. He threw it straight at a copper and then staggered back into the crowd. Two seconds later 3 plods and a flat-hat ran in after him. The punk started to run but because of his condition, he fell over. The cops pounced on top of him

and one of them got a pair of handcuffs out. People crowded round and someone shouted "Well come on then", and everyone piled in. The cops jumped up, forgetting their would-be prisoner, and I kicked the one with the handcuffs as hard as I could. They got battered and had to physically fight their way back to the cordon minus hats and radio's - you could see the blood on their faces.

Everyone was buzzing after that - this was our bit of the square and we weren't going to have pigs running round nicking people! As for the punk, he stayed on the floor a while, savouring his liberation in a drink and riot induced stupor!

After that I went up past St Martins church. It was 6.30pm by the clock and I was seperated from my mates and wondering if/how I was going to get out of London. But there was still rioting to be done! I walked through the furthest line of police and into the narrow streets leading to Covent Garden, an area where no cop had yet ventured. Most shops had been well and truly looted but it was by no means indescriminate.

For instance a kiosk was still open, selling food to the rioters while two doors down, Barclays Bank had beed trashed. Sports cars were forming a burning barricade across the road but 50 yards away motorists were being waved through the crowd. It was wealth that was the target - Stringfellows nightclub, car showrooms, jewellers and West End yuppie shops - these were the victims, not small shopkeepers or passers-by as the gutter press would have you believe. For once it was the rich who got a taste of our anger - we should take it to the West End and Whitehall a lot more often.

I had to leave after that, tired but happy. When I got home and turned on the news, people were still at it. Superb! ■

From "Merseyside Anarchist"

When anger turns to violence

IN THE aftermath of Trafalgar Square I see that the media is full to bursting with all the usual people, all falling over themselves to be the most appalled and surprised by the violence. There is a point of view, however, that is important and unrepresented.

I went along to the march to lend support and have a party. I belong to no organisation of any kind or colour. I have never before in my life been involved in violence against anyone and yet on the Saturday afternoon I found myself willingly taking part in the fighting. I would like to explain why this was so.

I have talked, I have written letters and attempted all manner of peaceful communication. I have attended numerous protest meetings and marches, all of them peacefully. The result has been that my voice has been ignored. Worse still, I have been talked down to, made to feel insignificant and inferior, made to apologise for wanting a modicom of justice in a country increasingly more unjust and outrageous. I have been intimidated and derided and on Saturday I was intimidated to the point where I felt unable to do any thing more than vent my anger against all the people and places which seemed to stand for all of the above.

When I was driven at by an armoured van, when I was charged time and time again by police in full riot gear, when I was watching people standing around me being bludgeoned to the ground by truncheons, when a line of horses rode at me, when I saw groups of six or seven officers arresting single people by the hair with the aid of truncheon stabs to the body, I had had enough and I joined the fight against it.

The talk of organised violence is mostly nonsense. Certainly a very small group of kiddies were there simply to fight, but even the police riot squads, with years of training, preparation, planning and experience, and numbering maybe 1-2,000 were disorganised and confused, so to imply that a group such as Class War, who couldn't organise themselves to go to the pub in the evening, were responsible for organising up to 3,000 people on the spur of the moment is ludicrous. The fact is that most of the crowd who rioted were doing so for the same reasons as I was.

I am not ashamed of my actions. I do not even pretend that I was making a point. I was simply very, very angry at being constantly ignored undermined and brushed aside.

People reading this letter may condemn me and tell me I did the cause a grave disservice, but if they believe that a peaceful, jolly march would have made Mrs Thatcher think again, then I'm afraid they are having serious problems with reality.

Whatever had happened on Saturday would have had no effect, the mass non-payment campaign will do that. The demonstration was simply a registering of feeling, and we must accept that the anger and frustration which became violence and destruction was an equally valid registering of feelings in the circumstances.

Name and address withheld.

An injured demonstrator

"The police tried to push us from both sides in Whitehall. People were in a panic. There were young children there and old people, but the horses were stepping on anybody. Everyone was terrified. The police looked as though they were enjoying it. It's no surprise that some people started to throw bottles and cans."

I was one of the thousands of peaceful protesters at the Anti-Poll Tax demonstration in London. Whilst the behaviour of some of the demonstrators was out of order, so too was the behaviour of the police.

The police appeared to be out of control at times and if they did have a strategy, it was a flawed one which contributed towards injury and damage instead of preventing it.

It appears that the trouble started in the Downing Street area. However, instead of containing the violence, the police pushed the violence into Trafalgar Square, where the majority were peacefully listening to the speeches.

The police mounted charges into the crowd on foot, on horseback and in vehicles. This inflamed what was by now, a tense situation and instead of having a few hundred people battling with them, drew in thousands who resented being beaten with truncheons and shields, trampled by horses and driven at by vehicles. If the police had wanted to incite a full scale riot, they could not have done it more effectively.

I saw a police car and van drive at about 30mph into a crowd of peaceful demonstrators, in front of Nelson's column. People had to run. When the vehicles came to a halt, they were attacked and their windows broken. They quickly turned around and drove out again at high speed through the crowd.

The latter part of this scene, the attack and the exit, was shown on ITN news but the beginning of the incident, the dangerous driving by the police, was not. The police car driver looked terrified when he realised the situation he had got himself into. Who ordered him to drive into the crowd?

The police then began to clear Trafalgar Square. The coach pick-up point was on the Embankment, to the South of the square. But the police closed the exits to the South and forced people North, out of the square. This pushed the rioters and ordinary demonstrators into Leicester Square and the West End.

In Trafalgar Square, there was very little for anyone to throw and not many targets to throw it at. In the West End there were piles of bricks and stones right next to streets full of plate glass windows. There were also thousands of puzzled and frightened tourists.

The police seriously mishandled the situation. They allowed what should have been a fairly minor incident, escalate into a full scale riot. Were the police incompetent? Did they for some reason wish to provoke the disturbances?

Alan Francis,
Milton Keynes.

LETTERS IN THE
GUARDIAN & GUARDIAN WEEKLY
APRIL 7th 90

How it happened

Flashpoint 1

As demonstrators assembled in Kennington Park the police sought unnecessarily to antagonise those elements most likely to cause trouble. They attempted to take black flags from anarchist demonstrators and a police inspector told his officers "Anyone with black flags, they've all been warned that they're going to get arrested." (Guardian 2/4/90)

Flashpoint 2

An entirely peaceful and legitimate sit-down protest outside Downing Street (which is protected by 40ft gates), that was not obstructing the flow of the march, was suddenly, and without warning, charged by police in full riot gear. Demonstrators were batoned with a ferocity which inflamed the atmosphere of the crowd.

Flashpoint 3

To divert the march from the scene they had created outside Downing Street, the police threw a cordon across Whitehall. Two friends separated by the sudden cordon tried to stay together and were wrestled to the ground and dragged away by seven officers. By roughly man-handling the crowd, this potentially calming measure was turned into a violent scuffle.

Flashpoint 4

As the diverted march reached Trafalgar Square, the police blocked the road and, for no apparent reason, attempted to force the demonstrators to enter the square three abreast. A frightening crush quickly developed and the pushing led directly to the deployment of riot police who batoned demonstrators and became a target for counter attack. This triggered disturbances in a previously peaceful and relaxed Trafalgar Square.

Flashpoint 5

Having provoked the crowd, the riot police chose not to contain or defuse the tension, but continued to charge indiscriminately both on foot and on horseback. These charges drew large sections of the crowd into the conflict, causing many injuries to peaceful demonstrators, and ultimately forcing the rioters out into the West End. This only made the situation worse.

The police are supposedly professionals, paid to maintain the peace by containing and defusing such situations. At each opportunity the police actions served only to inflame and incite the crowd. In the event over 400 people were injured, many needing hospital treatment. A more low-key approach by the police would surely have never led to this.

What we saw in Trafalgar Square is not new. Over the last fifteen years we have seen a number of police operations of this kind: at Grunwick, at Orgreave, at Wapping and when police attacked students at Westminster Bridge. During the Thatcher years brutal police tactics have been so regular that they have gained a certain 'legitimacy'.

STOP PRESS

Mark Brown, 22, a student nurse, of St Albans, Hertfordshire, was jailed for 28 days at Horseferry Road Court, London, after being found guilty of threatening behaviour during the riot in Trafalgar Square.

"The Independant"
Fri. 22.6.90

A MESSAGE TO ALL ANTI-POLL TAX CAMPAIGNERS

It's essential that all local organisations,and town and regional federations take this seriously.

As anti-poll tax opposition continues to grow and become more effective,the authorities are getting worried.They are therefore looking for ways to frighten and discredit the movement, especially at a time when millions are preparing not to pay their first bills.

Following the mammoth demonstration on March 31st (and the wave of earlier protests at Town Halls around the country),the hysteria and 'outrage' of the police,media and politicians (left & right) was carefully orchestrated.They aim to give the impression that our movement,the largest campaign of mass civil disobedience in Britain this century, in advocating mass non-payment and non-co-operation,is somehow a 'threat to society'.It is,in fact,a threat to the Government's Poll Tax!

And it is backed,in varying degrees,by the majority of the population even if they might yet feel able to join in.That's why so many people,according to opinion polls,understood what really happened at the national demonstration.

SHOW TRIALS

By opposing the show trials of Trafalgar Square protestors which are coming up this summer we will undermine the authorities' efforts to smash or discredit the movement.But also we will reaffirm that the legal system of this country is far from the all-powerful monolith it likes to pretend it is.

In Scotland,Sheriff's Officers trying to steal non-payers' furniture face angry doorstep crowds. In England and Wales the courts are preparing to force people to pay their bills this winter..BUT THEY WILL BE OVERWHELMED! THE TAX IS UNBEARABLE!

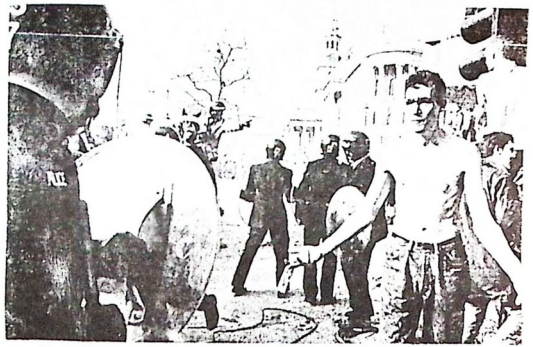
SUCCESSFUL RESISTANCE

Successful mass defiance of unjust laws,and refusal to be intimidated by oppressive policing and hostile propaganda,is a great part of our traditions,from the original Peasant's Revolt against the 1381 Poll Tax,up till today.That's how workers won the right to organise,women won the right to vote,homeless people forced Councils to build homes in 1945 (by occupying hotels and army camps) and so on.

In all these struggles,it was essential to support those victimised,fined and imprisoned. THIS WE MUST DO NOW - BY SHOWING UNCONDITIONAL AND COMPLETE SOLIDARITY WITH THOSE ARRESTED IN TRAFALGAR SQUARE.

STATEMENT OF AIMS

(1) Unconditional defence for all those arrested on 31/3/90.
(2) Campaign to be controlled by and be accountable to the defendants.
(3) Campaign to be totally independent of any other organisation.
(4) We will seek support from the whole Anti-Poll Tax movement and all other sympathetic organisations.
(5) The campaign will seek to coordinate the legal defence of all those arrested.
(6) We will seek to build a coherent picture of events of 31/3/90 from the point of view of those arrested.
(7) Campaign will publicise the points of view of defendants.
(8) Raise money for a Bust Fund, controlled by the defendants to cover their legal and welfare costs.
(9) To ensure that at all future Anti-Poll Tax events there will be proper legal cover and support for anyone arrested. This will include an office and workers to visit places of detention and look after prisoners welfare.



Join the campaign

The Trafalgar Square Defendants' Campaign was launched on May 3 by defendants and their supporters, based mainly in the London area. It met again on May 10 and will be meeting weekly from now on.

The first 2 meetings have brought together a large number of people who have rapidly begun to deal with the urgency of the tasks facing us. Essential jobs such as fund raising for defendants welfare costs and monitoring the courts, to ensure all defendants are aware of the charge, have begun to be organised, as well as building support for the campaign and general publicity to trace witnesses and inform the A.P.T. movement of the campaign.

The T.S.D.C. is to be run by defendants for defendants, since it is us who are on the line. The whole movement, as well as trade unions, tenants associations, and community groups, etc., must support these victimised from the demo. **We must fight back, against the massive witch hunt launched by the police and the government.**

So Far the T.S.D.C. has gathered information on over 150 defendants from all over the country. However, we need regional defendants' support groups Already people from B'ham will be launching a local defendants' campaign.

The March 31 Demo was a national expression of anger against the poll tax, and those arrested were from the whole movement.

Please launch a local Defendants' campaign, in touch with the T.S.D.C.

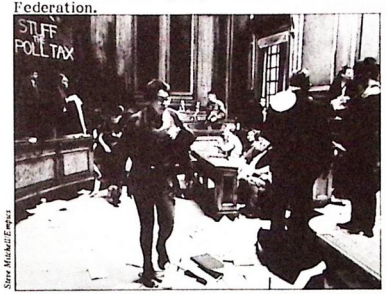
CONTACT THE T.S.D.C. AT; Haldane Society Lawyers, Panther House, 38 Mount Pleasant, London, WC1. Ph. 071 833 8958

Cont. from p1.

against the Poll Tax. It might alienate a few sympathetic politicians and bureaucrats for whom the Poll Tax is a matter of individual conscience, a question of moralistic opposition...but we need them like we need a knife in the back! The rioting will not alienate all those millions of working class people whose opposition to the Poll Tax is based on class interests: in plain language, less money in the pocket, fewer needed services and the total insult of having to pay the same as someone who might be a millionaire. That opposition is not going to waver because of the rioting - it is going to encouraged and stimulated even further. This is not mere rhetoric. The day after the demonstration, a local anti-Poll Tax stall had more than normal people coming up and asking questions and wanting to get involved. Only two people mentioned the rioting...and even after the media and politicians' onslaught on the riot which basically condemned everyone on it as a total nutter, both of these people thought that it was good! If the Poll Tax is going to be defeated, it is going to be defeated by class action and class action alone. Bureaucrats, politicians and moralism are the kiss of death. Lets not fool ourselves about this.

NOTTINGHAM UPDATE

The independent groups, immediately after Trafalgar Square, set up a Nottingham Defence Fund to provide support for those arrested. 8 people in Nottingham arrested on that day, and 4 (including myself) arrested after the Council Chamber occupation. We've held two benefit gigs, had collections at others and received donations from two anti-Poll Tax groups; in all over £500 has been raised. We've contacted the Trafalgar Square Defence Campaign in London, and sent a letter to all anti-Poll Tax groups in Nottingham (about 30 now). We're offering unconditional support for all people arrested, and at our last meeting it was encouraging to have people from the Sneinton, Meadows and Beeston groups along as well as St. Anne's, Hyson Green/Forest Fields, Sherwood and Radford. People were actually talking about making independent contact between groups outside of the Federation.



Steve Mitchell/Empics

Robin Hood, Robin Hood, riding through the glen . . .

It looks as if the Council are coming down very heavily on workers involved in anti-Poll Tax activity, and have banned all such meetings on Council property. They've also issued verbal warnings to the Nalgo branch chair and said there could be dismissals. There may well be strike action over the issue. Housing Benefit workers are now working a full 7-day week in order to try and clear the backlog, and rumour hath it that the Council has given up trying to chase and trace non-registerers. There was a lobby on Friday 25th May of the Council at County Hall in West Bridgford and about 80 people and dozens of police were there. I understand that a Council meeting was disrupted for nearly an hour on the same day by hecklers.

The bills were about four weeks late in Nottingham, and many people who have claimed rebates have been sent a full bill and told to pay up until it's sorted out. Gedling Borough Council (on the outskirts of Nottingham), in their breakdown of the bill, have included a levy for non-payers, which is probably liable to have a counter-productive effect from their point of view. As to the scale of nonpayment, your guess is as good as mine. The Council reckon on at least 40,000 (about 15-20%), but I think it could be much higher. There are an awful lot of "waverers", but at least there's a solid basis of organisation in almost every area of Nottingham. In the working-class areas there's massive support.

In Sherwood on paper, we have nearly 1,000 members, but what use is that if they're isolated and not even faintly involved?

On the whole, though, things seem to be going quite well.

Will Scarlett

HATFIELD ELECTION

The Hatfield Anti-Poll Tax Union, in which a number of Red Action supporters are involved, stood an Anti-Poll Tax Union candidate in the local elections in May. A number of options were proposed and discussed at a members' meeting, the most popular proving to be the standing of a single candidate in a Tory marginal. Most people were sensitive to the prospect of damaging Labour's precarious hold on the district Council which it currently controls by a majority of one. Other people felt that the Labour party's position on the Poll Tax is a disgrace since they not only propose to do the Tories' dirty work for them in collecting the tax, but also to impose legal penalties upon those who cannot or will not pay. Everyone (the decision was literally unaminous) felt that some form of protest needed to be made through the ballot box and so a single candidate was the selected option. We scored a highly respectable 400 votes, beating the Liberal Democrats who increased their own vote into fourth place. It is certainly the case that had the membership chosen to stand a candidate in a more promising (i.e. Labour held) ward, we would have gained two or even three times as many votes, and at least, have beaten the Tory candidate.

It is believed that the Hatfield APTU was the only Union in the country (and in Scotland) to stand in the elections. The reason is not far to seek. The National organisation, the All-British Federation, is dominated by the Militant Tendency. Militant do deserve serious credit for undertaking the organisation of a national anti-poll tax movement when no-one else, notably the SWP, did. However their fatuous conception of revolutionary action, ie entry into the Labour party and transformation of the country through the votes of parliamentary representatives, leads them to protect at all times a Labour party which not only, as they admit, is busy in eliminating all traces of socialism from its programme (let alone its legislation), but which expends huge resources in the effort to eliminate Militant itself. They are like the man in the joke who sends the fault in the guillotine by which he is to be executed. Militant members on the County Federation Committee succeeded in passing a resolution not condemning, but 'refusing to endorse' the Hatfield APTU's move.

The Hatfield APTU decided, through its members, to oblige the candidate to act as a **delegate** and so be bound to act, in all matters, according to the will of the union members as expressed by votes at union meetings. I cannot think of a single instance in which this procedure has been adopted within the British electoral system. It was not perhaps a giant step that would rock Westminster to its foundations. But it is certainly far more principled and democratic than the sad attempts of Militant to turn lead into gold by making the Labour party a vehicle of socialist revolution. We know where such attempts have lead in the past and where they will always lead in the future - to the betrayal of working people.

(Courtesy of RED ACTION)

NON-PAYMENT FIGURES

A 'Newsnight' survey, 14th June BBC2, reveals that mass non-payment is a reality in the main English cities.

Figures given for non-payment after 10 weeks:-

Brent 75%, Hackney 70%, Haringay 65% (all London); Birmingham 50%, Derby 40%, North Tyneside 38%, Newcastle Upon Tyne 33%, Nottingham 25%.

In the London Borough of Newham, 65,000 'East-Enders' had not paid and another 17,000 had paid once and stopped. Stratford Court was said to be booked up solid from July indefinitely, and if most defaulters insisted on hearings, it would take an eternity to obtain 'Liability Orders' (compelling people to tell the Council where they are employed or face the threat of a fine and Bailiffs). But as we all know in Scotland, it's easy to threaten but people don't take it seriously when the Poll Tax is grinding to a halt.

Keith (Ibrox-Cessnock)

DEEP END

The Tory Council in Poole, Dorset has obtained a Liability Order against Paul Ford, 33, 1 of 7 out of 85 people summoned who turned up in person. £30 court costs were added to the £325 Annual Charge due. This was the first 'successful' prosecution for the authorities.

'Independent' 15.6.90

VOTING- with our Feet.

The Scottish Fed. Conference took place recently against the background of the riots which followed the London demonstration. A stormy debate ensued on the issue of the riots. Needless to say, we had all the arguments whilst they had all the votes. Militant's compromise position which condemned 'Troublemakers' was won over resolutions which took a harder and more supportive stance towards those who took part in the 'Battle of Trafalgar'. The Conference did, however, decide to affiliate to the Trafalgar Square defendants campaign which is a step in the right direction.

The delegates from Pollok and Easterhouse who proposed the Militant resolution "condemned all violence" but then went on to threaten anyone who "intended causing trouble" at local demos with "answering to the youth of the area". Talk about hypocrites!

Barrhead A.P.T.U. put forward the SWP inspired resolution which "encouraged workers to add on Poll Tax supplements to their wage demands". Conference felt that this was a defeatist position which could undermine non-payment. A wage demand should be simply that. The link between the workplace and the Anti Poll Tax campaign should be non-payment and non-cooperation. The resolution was defeated.

Some of the more positive aspects of the Conference were the enthusiasm shown by delegates for the forthcoming Trade Union Conference in Liverpool. A workshop based conference will be convened despite the platform's initial 'doubts' as to its feasibility. These 'doubts' were magically transformed into support when Militant Regional Councillor Keith Simpson spoke in favour of the Stockbridge/Newtown resolution.

A resolution on Anti Racism/Anti Fascism was remitted in order that the Federation can discuss the types of action and mobilisations against Fascists and whether to affiliate to Glasgow Anti-Fascists (GAF). There was some hostility to GAF from Militant members whose main grumble seems to be the fact that they don't control GAF.

Overall, the Conference was a dull, disappointing and altogether predictable affair. The only highlight was when Tommy Sheridan referred to an interview given to the Evening Times by members of R. & R. editorial team. This seemed to re-animate many of the delegates who had either fallen asleep or were comatose! 300 delegates and visitors attended - 200 less than last year! Perhaps the biggest disappointment was that the majority of genuinely independent groups didn't bother to turn up, therefore giving Militant a completely 'trouble-free' and perfectly stage-managed conference.

Stevie (Dennistoun A.P.T.U.)

With friends like these...

The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) have had a tendency to yo-yo in and out of the anti-Poll Tax campaign in Scotland. Their approach to our struggle has been riddled with opportunism and sectarianism. Whilst SWP members are only too willing to advise and lecture us on what they see as the inadequacies of the campaign, most will run a mile if asked to do any real work such as leafletting an estate.

The SWP joined the fight against the Poll Tax 6 months after it had begun. This is because they adopted the position that as a community campaign it had no chance of mobilising anything significant against the Tories. After trying unsuccessfully to win over the massed ranks behind the Labour/STUC "Stop It", campaign, the SWP finally reached the conclusion that perhaps the Federation did have something to offer. Since joining the Federation, SWP members have been instructed to engage anti-Poll Tax activists in debate over almost anything but the Poll Tax. This is largely because the SWP are uncomfortable with any campaign which is not led by Trade Union Bureaucrats. Since the end of 1988, the SWP and Militant have been locked in a meaningless debate as to whether the cart comes before the horse, in terms of Trade Union involvement in the fight.

These tactics have altered only slightly since Paul McGarris centre-page article changed the line of Socialist Worker from heaping abuse on community based politics to showering praise on "the wonderful struggle" of the anti-Poll Tax unions. Only a handful of their members in Scotland have recognised the cynical opportunism of their party inside the Federation. Some have attempted to 'redeem' their reputations with at least some consistent work in their local anti Poll-Tax union. Others have simply left the SWP!

'Activity' against the Poll Tax for most SWP members consists of making long winded contributions at public meetings, selling papers outside of the meetings, and at all costs avoiding door to door leafletting.

Their scenario for industrial action against the Poll Tax involves a series of economistic demands which avoid the question of the tax altogether, and results in a situation where Poll Tax workers take strike action for higher wages along with other Trade Unionists in order to offset the effects of the tax. (This strategy was proposed by the SWP inspired resolution from Barrhead at the recent Scottish Fed. Conference). Such a strategy rejects the notion that non-payment together with non-implementation can defeat the Poll Tax. Indeed, the whole question of non-payment has never been a comfortable one for the SWP. There has been so much confusion caused by their party's inconsistent line that many SWP members in Scotland have actually paid their Poll Tax. This should come as no surprise when leaders of the SWP such as Chris Bambery were declaring in June 1989 that "There is nothing left in the Poll Tax for us".

A heated discussion in the Glasgow Central branch in August 1989 led to the majority, who had paid their Poll Tax, being labelled 'Scabs' by other members. Glasgow SWP full timer Alan "The Riddler" Ruddle then intervened with what must go down as the most inept piece of 'Marxist Analysis' in the last 2 years. He stated, "For us, the question of whether or not you pay your Poll Tax is irrelevant to the building of a campaign against it"!

Even the best work of individual SW members has been destroyed by the dictates of their idiotic and incompetent leadership. It was noticeable that the only people at the Scottish Fed. Conference who appreciated the sectarian attack made upon R. & R. by Drew McEwan (SWP) were members of his own party, who have been conspicious by their absence from local campaigns, and members of Militant. Indeed, after 'disassociating' himself from R. & R., McEwan then approached a member of our editorial team to "apologise" and "assure us" that "I'll be with you at the aggregates and when it comes to the bit" (whatever that means?). Refuse and Resist can assure McEwan and his erstwhile comrades in the SWP that we need their support as much as we need a rope around our necks!

The SWP have an uncanny knack of making friends quickly and then losing them even faster. After their turn towards the A.P.T.U.'s came an even faster retreat during the ambulance dispute which consumed their members for 6 months. During the SWP dubbed "Pay Battle" last Summer, their involvement in A.P.T.U.'s was non-existent. It seems that the SWP, with a few noteable exceptions, have taken every opportunity to avoid involvement in the anti-Poll Tax struggle, preferring to turn up at conferences and public meetings to lecture us on "How to beat the Tories". Speculation has been mounting amongst anti-Poll Tax activists that the threatened closure of Ravenscraig will again allow the SWP to get off the hook and jump onto another STUC bandwagon.

Stevie (Dennistoun)

'RANT & RAVE'

Big Day Hue and Cry

Hue and Cry who have popped up on a number of Anti-Poll Tax gigs (well, Pat Kane) gave a new rendition of their song 'I Refuse' on Glasgows Big Day. They turned the song into an Anti-Poll Tax ditty which went down well with the Glasgow crowd.

Keep up the refusing Pat & Co.

'The Red Mole' Writes:

Women Beware!

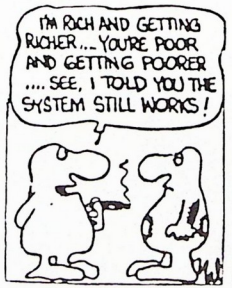
We hear that the Chair of the Cumbernauld Anti-Poll Tax campaign is none other than well known sexual harrasser and Militant member, Kevin "I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll kick your door down" McVey. Kevin has been known to turn up at young women's doors at 4 a.m., demanding entry and threatening violence. You have been warned.

Doing A Hatton!

Former Militant General Committee member and Secretary of Shawland APTU (remember them?) David "Degsy" Churchley is now the manager of the Great Eastern Hotel, a privately run establishment for the homeless in Glasgow's East End. Our spies inside the hotel inform us that "Degsy" Churchley 'asks' residents to wash his swanky Range Rover car which is regularly parked at the front of the building. Talk about rubbing their noses in it!

Making A Bob Or Two!

Another former Militant Central Committee member who is now doing very nicely, thank you - is Bob Wylie. Former strategist for the Poll Tax campaign and Militant's Scottish spokesperson, Bob now writes for such 'revolutionary' journals as the Glasgow Herald, Observer Scotland and Scotland on Sunday. Bob has been able to overcome the grumblings of his former comrades by writing profiles of 'Battling' Labour MPs like Dick "The Miner's Friend" Douglas and of course his now legendary whitewash (sorry, profile) of former protege Tommy Armageddon. Nice work if you can get it!



Riddles and Puzzles

"For us, the question of whether or not you pay your Poll Tax is irrelevant to building a campaign against it!"

(Alan "The Riddler" Ruddle, Glasgow SWP Full Timer).

"One successful Warrant Sale will finish off the campaign against the Poll Tax".

(Duncan "Donut" Brown, SWP; December 1989)

"The struggle over pay was wonderful. The Ambulance workers struggle was wonderful. And the struggle against the Poll Tax is wonderful."

(Duncan "Donut" Brown, SWP; March 1990)

Changing Their Tune

"The police were 95% to blame for the riots"

Tommy Armageddon, Scottish Fed. Aggregate, April 1990)

"The police were 100% to blame for the riots"

(Tommy Armageddon, Scottish Fed. Conference, May 1990)

Militantspeak

"Our stewards were spat upon and threatened"

(Tommy Armageddon, Strathclyde Fed. Aggregate, April 1990)

"Black Stewards and women Stewards were abused with racist and sexist language, and they were physically attacked and beaten up".

(Tommy Armageddon, Scottish Fed. Conference, May 1990)

Pardon?

"We don't condone the looting and violence. But the police used a water cannon to put out a lighted match and inflamed the situation."

(Steve Wally - All Britain Anti Poll Tax Federation)

Lookalikes

Dear Rant & Rave,

I have recently noticed the remarkable resemblance, both personally and politically, between Militant NUS full timer and Anti-Poll Tax activist, Dougie Blackstock and Dr. Robert Runcie, the Archbishop of Canterbury. Are they perchance related? I think we should be told.

Yours, **T.T. McKey (Glasgow)**

Dougie Blackstock Dr. Robert Runcie

April Fool

"We will hold our own enquiry which will go public, and which, if necessary, will name names".

(Steve Wally, A.B.A.P.T.F. Secretary; ITN, 9.45p.m. Sunday 1st April)

Whose Side Are They On?

"We condemn the Anarchists and Quasi-Marxist sects who are attempting to justify unprovoked attacks on the police and looting. We call for a Labour Movement enquiry to unmask and deal with the disruptors and disorganisers of Saturday's demonstration."

(Militant Editorial Statement - 6th April 1990)

HERE WE GO cont. from p1

Yet, local Anti-Poll Tax groups are not becoming complacent or lulled into a false sense of premature 'Victory'. Task Forces and local action squads are still necessary in every area, drawing up lists of volunteers prepared to be available at short notice, to mobilise outside the home of any threatened poinding.

In Govan, the local Federation has been holding a series of public meetings in every district of the area, to drum up support for their Street Committees. In Ibrox-Cessnock, regular stalls have persuaded around 80 local people to sign up for a Task Force. In this area and others, probably less than 1/3 of those are available during the day, but others have indicated they still want to be contacted at short notice or might 'go sick' if somebody is threatened locally.

This local resistance, as the experience in Edinburgh and the Lothians prove, is as necessary as any Federation recruited group of 'Scumbusters', since it is always possible poindings could be at the same time and there would be a need to disperse our forces.

The Tory government is happy to exist on a diet of lies and deceit, not realising that in England and Wales the court system will be clogged up by masses of non-payers demanding a hearing. Collaborating Councils in Scotland are making provision for job losses if the 'Bad Debt Provision' (levels of non-payment) exceeds 6%. The official figure is at least 3 times that. The Poll Tax is becoming unworkable due to the effort and determination of local Anti-Poll Tax groups.

Jim McFarlane
(Ibrox-Cessnock)

Poll tax protests disrupt courts

Martin Wainwright

POLL tax opponents clogged a magistrates' court yesterday when only eight out of 879 scheduled non-payment cases were heard in Goole, Humberside.

Two defendants were acquitted because of administrative errors by Conservative-controlled Boothferry district council, which is hoping to chase nearly 4,000 defaulters on its £313 tax through the courts.

The council's paperwork was described as a shambles by Christopher Hollerbach, unemployed, of Rawcliffe, near Goole, who was acquitted when his solicitor produced documents showing that his tax was not due until June 26.

The magistrates later warned 60 protesters in court not to applaud when points were scored against the council. There was a burst of clapping when a defendant appeared in a T-shirt with the slogan "Bollocks to the Poll Tax."

The clerk to the court asked: "Would you like to go home and take that T-shirt off?" To further applause the man refused but put on a jacket.

Some 200 protesters demonstrated outside the building at the start of the hearings. There was also a demonstration at Northampton magistrates' court where 37 defaulters were served with liability orders. They included a man whose defence that he was a Cornish tin miner and exempt from the tax by ancient statute was rejected.

Northampton council has opted to take action against a list of known opponents of the tax, rather than swamp local courts with all 25,000 people who have failed to pay any part of its £349 charge.

David Pallister adds: Eleven people were arrested in dawn raids yesterday by police investigating the anti-poll tax riot in Trafalgar Square in March.

ANTI- POLL TAX OPEN FORUM

STIRLING SATURDAY 30TH JUNE 1990 9.30-6.30

Raploch Community Centre, 15 Glendevon Drive, Raploch.

An opportunity for people involved in fighting the Poll Tax to come together for a day of debate and information exchange

WORKSHOPS

* Organising our Communities
* Building Communication
* What about England and Wales
* Refuse and Resist
* Anti-Poll Tax Federations
* Stopping the Sheriff's Officers
* Organising Successful Demos
* Are we Winning?
* Poll Tax and Workers
* Broadening the Struggle

OPEN FORUM

Report backs from the groups and open discussion from the floor

EVENING SOCIAL GATHERING

A chance to get to know other participants before an informal setting. Venue to be announced.

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All articles, letters and donations to:-

STOP PRESS: For last minute information or details of events requiring coverage by the editorial team call - 041 423 6679 or 427 6398

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REFUSE & RESIST is a FREE publication and, as such, it is dependant on donations from groups and individuals.

PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY!!!

LETTERS

Dear all at R. & R., Southampton

A copy of your paper was sent to me by Counter Information - very impressed. Anyway, I'm part of Portswood Anti-Poll Tax Union - not affiliated to the Fed. and fucking proud of it - (they denounce us as anarchist sectarians!) and we'd like some copies for our stall which we have outside Safeways every Saturday.

I enclose a fiver for some copies.

I could bore you silly with stories about Militant and the Fed. but life is possible outside it. I've popped in a couple of stamps to help with the postage.

Dave Carr

Box 245,
St. Albans
Herts.

Dear People,

Could you please send me a copy of your "Refuse & Resist" paper. I belong to our local A.P.T.U. here in St. Albans, which is not dominated by any political faction. Our meetings are organised along broadly Anarchist lines which has meant a continuing active presence by people who do not normally get involved in such things.

What our group needs is more communication with other groups. There is a Hertfordshire A.P.T. Federation but that is dominated by Militant, which has led to very little activity. Scotland has set the example for all the A.P.T.U.s in England, it would be good to get some hard factual information from you.

Thanking you in advance. **Dave**

Thanks to Counter Information, Red Action, Black Flag, Workers Press and other News sheets which have publicised R. & R.

Refuse and Resist,
c/o Murray,
31 Leven St.,
Glasgow G41 2JD

or

Refuse and Resist,
2/3, 182 Ark Lane,
Glasgow G31 2JS

GROUPS

BARMULLOCH COLLEGE APT: Contact Paul, SRC Offices.

DENNISTOUN APT: Contact 2/3, 182 Ark Lane for details.

GOVAN: Hotline Nos. 445 6216/0585/2321/4894 and 445 2071/0437/2029/4300/5301

GRANGEMOUTH ANTI-POLL TAX GROUP:-
Helen Allan, 84 Oswald Ave., Grangemouth. (0324) 484344

IBROX/CESSNOCK A.P.T: Meets fortnightly at Whitefield Rd. Community Hall. Secretary, D. MacKay, 32 Midlock St. Local 'Hotline' Numbers - 427 3691/6398/4109

POLLOKSHIELDS A.P.T.: 8 p.m. last Wednesday of month PDA Hall, McCulloch St. Hotline - 423 0461/8679, 429 0336

POSSIL APT: 7 p.m. every Wednesday, Possil Community Council Flat, Sunnylaw St. Contact A. McCormack 336 5359.

ROYSTON APT: Contact Duncan, 16/6, 40 Rosemount St. Royston.

WOODLANDS APT: 332 8124/8728; 332 9015

Dear Comrades, Hull.

Your bulletin was given a plug in Black Flat and I'd appreciate if you could send a few copies down. We'll read them and pass them round so you can be sure they'll be well read.

Love and A

Hullo Refuse & Resist, London

Canning Town A.P.T.U. would be interested in receiving a copy of your paper for non-aligned (politically) A.P.T.U.s. It would also be useful to have contact with other Anti-Poll Tax groups, especially those in Scotland.

We are at the beginning, awaiting the summonses for non-payment to arrive. However, we're fighting back against this unjust, vindictive tax on existence, which makes the rich richer at the expense of everyone else.

Hope to hear from you soon.

In Solidarity,

Barbara, Canning Town A.P.T.U.

Dear R. & R.,

Greetings from Wales. We've just had the second annual conference of the Welsh Federation of Anti-Poll Tax Unions, at Swansea on the 9.6. Enclosed is a copy of the motions submitted and passed, etc.

The committee of the Welsh Fed. is dominated by Militant, and they managed to 'police' the conference quite well - all of the posts for the committee went to 'Milites' unopposed, and all recommendations of the steering committee were accepted. Guest speakers included Steve Nally, the trade unions officer from the Strathclyde Fed. and one from the Youth Rights Campaign. All round the hall were Militant posters, there was a Militant stall and the platform was festooned with Militant posters and papers. Other groups were not encouraged to display their material in a like manner!

Militant speakers are still peddling the Tory lie that the Trafalgar trouble was the result of a police 'over reaction' to groups deliberately starting trouble; in doing so Militant are creating divisions and marginalising those arrested.

In the end the conference was disappointing, not just because it was so obviously Militant dominated but also because attempts to wide the geographical base of the Fed. and make it a Fed. covering the whole of Wales (it's at present restricted to South Wales where Militant is stronger) were defeated on the recommendation of the steering committee.

Eddie (Canton APTG, Cardiff)

T/SOR/3/8/81

REFUSE AND RESIST.

NEWS FROM LOCAL ANTI-POLL TAX GROUPS

NO. 5 LAST ¾ 1990 BY DONATION

SHOOT THE SHERIFFS BASH THE BAILIFFS

Our message is clear - we're not paying and we are winning! Despite all of the Tory propaganda to the contrary, the latest figures from local councils across Britain show that not only are the non-payment figures holding firm, but in areas such as Scotland they have actually increased by around 100,000!

We have the Tories and their lackeys in the Labour Party on the run! But we can't stop there - In England turning up at court can get your case adjourned or clog up the system. Active defiance is needed to defeat all efforts at collection.

As well as token marches to London which involve only a few of our number, we need to turn back to the local communities for inspiration and mass activity against the Poll Tax.

Mass action in every town in Britain has to be built in order that when the Bailiffs and Sheriffs show their ugly heads in our communities, we have the stick with which to batter them.

We will not be intimidated by the State's bully boys, whether in the shape of Sheriffs in Scotland, Bailiffs in England and Wales, or in the shape of the "Good Old British Bobby" that we witnessed at Trafalgar Square in March of this year. We must fight back with all of the means at our disposal. If we don't then the Tories will stitch us up just as they are attempting to frame those who fought back in the "Battle of Trafalgar!"

On October 30th, across Britain, local groups and Federations must mobilise against the Bailiffs and Sheriffs. Pickets, occupations, Public Meetings and rallies need to be organised like never before.

Let's frighten the shit out of the Tories scumbag Poll Tax collectors!

If your local Federation hasn't organised anything yet then get your group organised!

Remember, in the local communities, where the struggle against the Tax began, people are still angry and prepared to fight.

Let's make sure that Thatcher and her lackeys in the local Councils live to regret their rotten Poll Tax.

'Dirty Den'

FINAL WORD?

'Despite TV's' contribution to Channel 4's Critical Eye series was a damning indictment of the Metropolitan Police and the State generally in regard to the riots which followed the Anti-Poll Tax rally on 31st March. It was also a crushing indictment of the Militant leadership of the All Britain Anti-Poll Tax Federation and an exposure of their campaign of misinformation and downright lies which followed the Trafalgar Square events.

The programme provokes one to examine our attitudes generally to the State and its ordinary "British Bobby". It also provoked me into questioning the kind of snivelling, grovelling leadership which sits at the top of the Federation, and which still refuses to accept fully their failures at Trafalgar Square and their misdemeanors since.

For example, the aptly named "Wally Kennedy", chief steward at Downing Street who, on national T.V., claimed that 'Anarchists' had provoked the police and the subsequent riot when interviewed on the day. Wally had obviously decided that this story would not hold up to scrutiny some months later, and so talked of 'Agent Provocateurs' coming from Police vans into the crowd. No doubt, there is some substance to these claims but it is all too convenient for Militant supporters to use because it backs up their original contention that the trouble flared from the crowd.

At the end of the day I don't care who threw the first stone - us or them? But "Wallies" like Kennedy can conveniently let themselves off the hook with cries of wolf!?!

The programme also posed serious questions about how we steward our events in the future and how much we should follow the 'advice' of the Police (if at all?)

Stevie (Dennistoun APT)

FREE THE PRISONERS DROP ALL CHARGES.

Since the events in Trafalgar Square on March 31st, nearly 600 people have been arrested. The State has desperately tried to criminalise the Anti-Poll Tax movement by blaming the riot on demonstrators and even passers-by. The only criminals on March 31st were dressed in blue uniforms. The police have added on as many charges as possible hoping that some of them will stick. Despite this, 30% of defendants have been acquitted.

However, there are now over 30 Trafalgar Square defendants in prison. It has been difficult to get details of their whereabouts to give them support in time, as most are getting 28 days. Some defendants are being given much harsher sentences. In one case Robert Robinson, with no previous convictions, was given 2 years for kicking a police car.

The Trafalgar Square Defendants' Campaign have organised successful pickets outside Pentonville and Brixton prisons with prisoners hanging out a No Poll Tax banner and T-shirt in response. The campaign is also making welfare payments of £10 per month to prisoners.

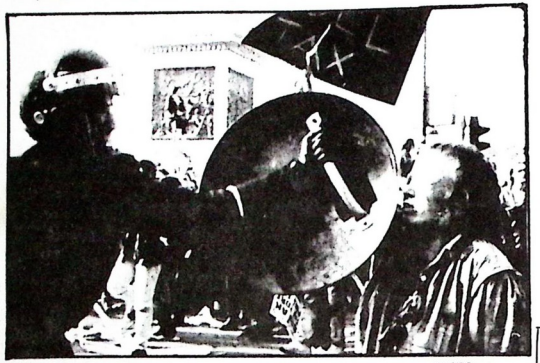


PHOTO: BLACK FLAG

Show your solidarity by writing to the prisoners and supporting the Trafalgar Square Defendants' Campaign.

Robert Robinson (O'Reilly),
RA0741 HMP Camp Hill,
Newport. Isle of Wight

Paul Jacob,
RA0771, HMP Brixton,
Jebb Ave.,
London SW2

Chris Sawyer,
MT 3920,
HMP Pentonville,
Caledonian Rd.,
London N2 8TT

Some other prisoners listed in 'Stand Firm' August issue (T.S.D.C.) have been released. Contact and affiliate to the T.S.D.C. if possible.

Trafalgar Square Defendants' Campaign,
c/o Haldane Society of Lawyers,
Room 205, Panther House,
38 Mount Pleasant,
London WC1X 0AP
(Tel. 071-833-8958)

(Mark, Glasgow A.B.C.)

The Nottingham Defence Fund Report

The Nottingham Defence Fund (NDF) was formed to assist financially those Anti-Poll Tax activists who were arrested in the aftermath of the March 5th 'Robin Hood' occupation of the Nottingham Council Chamber and the police riot of March 31st at Trafalgar Square, London. Many are facing serious charges, perhaps prison terms, plus hefty fines and the cost of travelling to London to attend court. Therefore, financial aid is needed to alleviate their plight.

Many of those facing charges following Trafalgar Square come under the Public Order Act of 1986. These include Riot (maximum sentence 10 years/unlimited fine); Violent Disorder (max. 5 years/unlimited fine); Affray (max. 3 years/fine). One person from Bristol has already pleaded guilty to obstruction because he could not afford to travel to London for court appearances. The use of video and still photo evidence by police/prosecution in their campaign against the Trafalgar Square people is ominous. So is the attitude of a compliant press, who, with one or two notable exceptions, did not contest the ruling at the Old Bailey ordering the handing over of material recorded on March 31. Over 30,000 photos and 90 hours of video tape have been sifted through. This degree of co-ordination by the prosecution should be matched by the defendants and their supporters - by demanding the same access to such "evidence" so that an effective defence can be established.

A University student, Neil Fernandez of Surrey, was remanded on stringent bail conditions of £20,000, ordered to surrender his passport and ordered to stay indoors between 10.30 p.m. and 6 a.m. as well as reporting daily to his local police station. He is accused of setting fire to a Porsche and a Jaguar and assaulting a P.C.

Nottingham Defence Fund, Box DF, 72 Radford Rd., Nottingham NG7 5FT

MIDLOTHIAN Campaign

We're winning! That's the message from the Anti Poll Tax Movement in Lothian Region. The official figures show the numbers of non-payers are **growing.** After their humiliating defeats in Edinburgh in April and East/Midlothian in June the Sheriff Officers have not dared to give notice of any more poindings. The rantings and ravings of Councillor Begg about imminent Warrant Sales have been exposed as empty threats.

Non-Payment Grows

By the end of August 1990 non-payers were still with-holding over £35 million of the '89-'90 Poll Tax, 19% of the revenue due. This was all supposed to be paid by March 1990 at the very latest. When you take into account non-payers on rebates, non-payers who started paying then stopped and non-payers who are not registered, then the % of **non-payers** will be way above 19%.

The Council admit to sending out 186,000 summary warrant letters and an incredible 406,000 reminder letters for the '89-'90 Poll Tax. With around 600,000 on the Poll Tax register that means **two-thirds** are, or have been, in arrears! And the numbers not paying are on the increase. By the end of August Poll Tax payments made for '90-'91 were **4% down** on the same time last year.

Labour Councillors such as "Bampot" Begg have been raving away in the local press accusing non-payers of responsibility for the service cuts they are about to make, and issuing dire threats that they will very soon - "very reluctantly" of course - have to carry out Warrant Sales against supposed well-heeled non-payers.

Anti Poll Tax groups have fought back against this nauseous propaganda. Prestonfield Community Resistance against the Poll Tax have produced an excellent poster/leaflet with mug shots of Begg & Co. beneath the headline UNWANTED. They point out that for over 2½ years the Anti Poll Tax movement has been telling Lothian Labour Councillors that sooner or later they would face the choice of setting an unaffordable Poll Tax or decimating jobs and services. They show clearly that the real reasons the Poll Tax is high is because • it reduces the tax paid by the rich and big businesses • the Tory central government have slashed the Revenue Support Grant to local authorities • the Poll Tax is so costly to administer. And they declare **"There have been no Warrant Sales in Scotland so far, nor will there be as long as people support each other".**

The determination of the Anti Poll Tax movement in Lothian to stop all poindings and Warrant Sales was shown once more in June. Anti Poll Tax groups successfully stopped the Sheriff Officers carrying out poindings in towns and villages throughout East and Midlothian. Crowds defended non-payers' homes in Prestonpans, Dunbar, Port Seaton, Pathhead, Tranent, Rosewell and Penicuik. In Pathhead, building workers stopped work and joined the protest. 60-100 people - including activists from Morpeth in Northumberland - stood guard from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., defying both Sheriff Officers and the police.

Not one poinding was carried out. Both the organisational work by groups such as Mayfield/Newtongrange and the groundswell of local community solidarity were outstanding. At least 2 new Anti Poll Tax groups have since been formed in localities where the poindings were stopped. Cont. **

Bizarre Appropriations

Since the introduction of the Poll Tax Grampian Regional Council has acted with unrestrained aggression in pursuit of refuseniks. It was the first to use poindings, wage arrestments and bank account sequestration for non-registration. In Woodhill House files are assiduously compiled on resistors, often detailing tittle-tattle that has no relevance to the Poll Tax. For its efforts GRC now occupies the fundamentalist prow of Thatcher's flagship. Indeed, Councillor Rhona Kemp, Liberal Chair of the Finance and General Purposes committee, esteems Sheriff Officers so highly that she would have them running the Region.

Last month Bizarre Appropriations (aka GRC) seized the expenses and attendance allowances of 14 SNP Councillors. An Act of Parliament dating from 1592 was dredged up to legitimise the grab. Regional employees were also threatened with this neanderthal law, which would have allowed the total debt to be cleared in a single arrestment. The whole exercise was a bluff, and, after receiving wide publicity, was dropped (though not for the 14 SNP Councillors) while the local press looked the other way. However, Regional employees wages have been arrested, under Debtors (Scotland) Act legislation, in Grampian. We have consulted a QC on this matter and were informed that in his opinion Regional authorities are unable to arrest their own employees wages. Watch this space.

There have been no Warrant Sales in Grampian for either non payment or non-registration. Poindings stopped (as far as we know) several months ago. The Council is now controlled by a coalition of Labour and the SLD. One prominent Labour Councillor told a member of Aberdeen Against the Poll Tax that we should be thankful that the favoured option is now wages and bank arrestment ('Socialism is never having to say hello to a Sheriff Officer').

Since the Regional elections, the Labour group in Grampian is perceptibly becoming indistinguishable from its counterpart in Lothian and Strathclyde. The Marks and Spencers faction will anguish over injustice provided it doesn't crease its designer conscience. During the Regional election campaign AAPT's helpline was assailed by calls from Labour candidates who could only offer open mouths in response to the queries of their constituents. Over a year ago Bob Middleton, Labour convener of GRC, stated that the less well off would not pay any more under the Poll Tax than they did under the rates. I also enjoyed the Xmas pantomime, although I found never-never land less convincing than Councillor Middleton.

For some time members of Aberdeen Against the Poll Tax have felt that the campaign is becoming increasingly a response to Sheriff Officers. Discussion of the Poll Tax itself was becoming more peripheral as we directed our energies towards defending those under attack. We therefore decided to call a public meeting and invite speakers from all political parties (sans Tories). Only Alex Salmond showed up for the SNP. Everyone from Labour had a conference to go to. This hasn't always been the case.

Cont. p9

**Since that humiliation for Sheriff Officer Love and his lackeys, the Sheriffs have generally been keeping a low profile. Numerous letters have been posted out and some letters have been hand-delivered but there have been no confirmed poinding attempts and certainly no letters notifying poinding dates.

The Movement

Though many groups experienced a minor 'down-turn' over the summer, there was an excellent response to the march with the 'Glasgow to London' bikers through Edinburgh on 11 September. 100 - 150 attended the Anti Poll Tax Feds Vs. Begg debate hosted by Gorgie Dalry APTU. Many local groups, especially the 'independent' ones, are still actively maintaining street stalls, door to door leafleting, flyposting and weekly or fortnightly meetings.

With Militant seeming to be in some disarray locally, the independent groups have successfully moved motions at the Lothian Anti Poll Tax Federation to hold a picket of the Scottish Office as part of the 19/20 October International Days of Solidarity with the Trafalgar Sq. defendents, and to provide transport to the London Anti Poll Tax march on 20 October.

With a strong presence of community-based independent groups, the Anti Poll Tax movement in Lothian is proving itself among the strongest in the country.

Mike (Stockbridge New Town Anti Poll Tax Group)

London Calling

Dave (North London) reports:-

Court Summonses are underway in different zones of London. Starting in outer Boroughs such as Enfield & Barnet, areas of less organised resistance, infamous Tory Borough Wandsworth started pursuing the masses of non-payers.

As in Northampton, Wandsworth has gone straight to the Bailiffs. Although the local campaign has mobilised for people given Notice of visits, and the Bailiffs have failed to show on 2 occasions in September, they have carried out several aggressive seizures of goods and taken away personal effects along with luxury items.

Elsewhere, Court battles are just beginning. In Camden a major success was scored by the non-payers who turned up to represent themselves. They had their cases adjourned till next year. A crowd approaching 300 has been turning up each Friday, and locally spreading the news - TURN UP AND GET YOUR CASE ADJOURNED. Liability Orders have been granted against all those who didn't bother to turn up.

In Hackney, the first sitting was on the 28th September, as were Tower Hamlets & Newham Boroughs. It is likely that a similar situation will emerge as is happening in Camden. Protestors have been less successful in delaying or disrupting action against those who fail to turn up. In 'Liberal Democrat' Tower Hamlets, Paddy Ashdown's caring image is taking a knock as the Council tries the scare tactic of withdrawing Council services like bin collections from identifiable non-payers in houses without shared amenities.

Beating the bailiffs

'3D' September

by Danny Burns

After the bailiffs were successfully resisted nine times last month in Northampton, the battle ground moved to Wales and the South West.

It had become clear late in July that most councils in the South West were going to use bailiffs. The South West Federation held a dayschool on responses to the bailiffs and from there set up a bailiff monitoring group in Bristol.

It quickly became clear that a large number of South West councils were going to use the same bailiffs — a company called *Roach and Co.* based in Bristol. The Avon Federation moved into action. We watched their movements for a week and identified all their cars (they had a series of Nissan vans).

We looked them up in the Companies Register. We examined their premises and discovered that their compound was at the end of a cul de sac (ideal for pickets.) We put this information out to local groups who in themselves turned up a load of information about the bailiffs — some new them personally, others had useful 'dirt' for the press campaign.

The action began on August 3rd. In the previous week Roaches had been both to Bishops Lydeard (a small village near Taunton) and Barry (in South Wales) to deliver a 'walking possession' notice. This meant (in two cases where they had been able to gain access to the houses) that they were in a position to take people's possessions.

We called a blockade for 7am Friday morning. People turned up from APTUs across Bristol. No vehicles were able to leave the compound, and we got massive press coverage. In fact a number of vehicles left from the bailiffs private homes. They were spotted by our people crossing the Severn Bridge at 7.30am. They never arrived, but the van was discovered sometime later with its tyres let down.

Meanwhile in Barry and Bishops Lydeard, the whole community was mobilised. In Barry over fifty people were outside the houses of the threatened families; telephones on the window sill; another two hundred people ready to respond to a phone call; vehicles roaming the area watching for bailiffs; kids, prams, icecream vans creating a carnival atmosphere.

In Bishop Lydeard half the village decided to take the day off. All the roads in were sealed off by the community. All cars going through were required to identify themselves. The bailiffs never got near the village.

These scenes prove that the non payment figures are not just empty statistics which will crumble as the threats get stronger. The community is proving its strength — this has inspired people throughout the South West. It has sent shockwaves through council and government.

news

*** 1000 people took over the magistrate's court in Warrington on Thursday 28th June when the council tried to summon people for non-payment. Because of the mass demonstration none of the cases were dealt with.**

*** Suspended Hackney council worker Andy Murphy got his job back after his fellow workers threatened to go on strike.**

Greenwich strike!

Town Hall workers are on the sharp end of the Tory poll tax. They are expected to collect it from people who resent paying, and have to tell some people they won't get a rebate. Housing workers in Greenwich, south London, have been on strike since early May after cashiers were suspended for refusing to collect the Poll Tax.

For them, it means extra work and the council have not offered extra staff or pay. The council have taken on NALGO, the town hall union, at a time when poll tax capping threatens many jobs and services, as councils slash their spending to keep the poll tax down. The 160 NALGO members have received great support from the public, with thousands refusing to cross their picket lines. Messages of support and donations to: Greenwich NALGO strike fund, NALGO office, Love Lane, Woolwich, London SE18.

LIVERPOOL - TOP OF THE LEAGUE! and that's not just in football. When official figures for non-payment of the poll tax were released last month the effect in this city was as electrifying as any John Barnes goal - a massive 51% of the population hadn't paid a penny while 50% of the business rate remained unpaid. The figures don't take into account the many thousands who escaped registration altogether. Magnificent!

Join the Super League:-

Liverpool	51%
Lambeth	48%
Glasgow	44%
Haringey	42%
Hackney	38%
Norwich	36%
Birmingham	35%
Manchester	35%
Bath	35%
Lothian	30%

NON-PAYMENT BREAKING THE POLL TAX !

Any other Contenders?

Jail threat over poll tax protest

A 75-year-old poll tax protester was told yesterday that if he did not pay the tax within 14 days he would be jailed.

The ultimatum to Cyril Mundin, from Northampton, which could make him the first person to be jailed for non-payment, was delivered by Northampton magistrates. He shouted from the dock: "I shall not pay."

Cyril Mundin —

Poll tax demonstrators seize council treasurer

Andrew Culf

A COUNCIL treasurer was held for an hour in his office yesterday by poll tax demonstrators protesting about the case of a pensioner who may become the first person jailed for not paying.

Twenty-two people pushed into the office of Alan Maskell, Northampton borough council treasurer, and barricaded themselves in. Mr Maskell, who phoned police to say he was being held against his will, was able to leave after an hour. Five protesters were arrested as they left the office, while the remainder continued the occupation, which went on last night.

About 20 police officers, including a negotiator, were sent to the first floor office. Police said there had been no damage and no violence.

The protesters said they were demanding withdrawal of threats to imprison Cyril Mundin, aged 74, who has been summonsed to appear before a means inquiry at Northampton magistrates' court today for failing to pay the charge and refusing access to bailiffs.

Speaking before his office was occupied, Mr Maskell said: "He has the means to pay, but he has repeated publicly he does not wish to pay for personal reasons." Mr Mundin qualifies for a rebate, and is liable to pay about £230.

Mr Maskell stressed that the council — which has ordered action by bailiffs against about 200 defaulters — is acting as it did under the old rates system.

Russell Burrows, a spokesman for the Northampton Anti Poll Tax Union, said Mr Mundin was determined not to attend court. "He believes the poll tax is morally wrong and would not pay if he was a millionaire."

Alan Murdie, a barrister who is chairman of the Poll Tax Legal Group, said: "If he does not attend the hearing, it will be open to the magistrates to issue a warrant for arrest to bring him before the court so a means inquiry can be held.

"If they find he has not paid through wilful refusal or culpable neglect, the court can send him to jail for three months, give him a suspended sentence of three months, or set conditions for payment of the debt, with a threat of imprisonment."

Four months ago, a firebomb caused £180,000 damage to the premises of Madagalis, the bailiffs employed by the council, an attack condemned by the local poll tax union.

● Social services staff are on indefinite strike in the south London borough of Wandsworth, protesting at job losses and cuts.

Toby Kinder, chairman of the Wandsworth branch of the National and Local Government Officers Association said the strike, in protest at 190 planned job losses, involved about 50 staff.

The union was opposed to a social services review which meant everyone in the department re-applying for their jobs.

Mike Rundle, director of social services, said 29 staff were on strike, causing only minor inconvenience. There would be no compulsory redundancies.

3 NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS RESIGN

Danny Burns (Vice Chair)
Ian Greaves (Assistant Secretary)
Sham Singh (Trade Union Officer)

We have resigned our positions as from 17 June (the last meeting of the national committee). We will, however, continue to work on the committee in a constructive way, representing our regions and developing initiatives where it is possible for us to make a positive input. However, we feel unable to retain our posts because we have been systematically prevented from carrying them out.

When we agreed to take positions on the national committee we recognised that it was dominated by supporters of the Militant tendency. We had great reservations about this because the committee did not reflect the diversity of the movement on the ground. Nevertheless, we were prepared to work with Militant supporters in a constructive way in the interest of the wider movement. We hoped that Militant would embrace the diversity of the movement and engage a wide variety of groups and individuals in the huge array of tasks which needed to be undertaken. Unfortunately, this was not to be the case. Militant has sought to operate as a tight cadre and this has had an extremely damaging effect. We can cite some examples:

The national committee agreed, after some pressure, to hold a trade union conference. We assumed that this would be co-ordinated by the Trade Union Officer. However, he has consistently been by-passed in a way which would not be possible in any other democratic organisation.

It is our belief that the national bulletin is of critical importance. One of the key roles of a national federation must be communication. Ian Greaves and Danny Burns took responsibility for producing the newsletter. The first one was produced after three days work and delivered to the secretary and thereafter never saw the light of day. The second one was produced and 25,000 copies were printed. They were delivered on time for the national demonstration but were never distributed. The third one was produced unilaterally by Steve Nally, once again totally by-passing the officers responsible. Furthermore, national committee members consistently failed to provide regional reports for the bulletin. This was not because they did not have the time; they produced regular reports for the Militant newspaper. The fact that Militant has been unable to delegate tasks to people outside of their organisation has, in our view, had other negative effects on the campaign.

For example, the National Federation is over £12,000 in debt. It had a demonstration of 250,000 people. Even if we had only collected 10p from each person, we could have raised £25,000. But there were no financial stewards. The reason for this is that there was no delegation. If the Avon Federation or Leeds had been asked to help, we would have gladly done so. We did point out that the demonstration was likely to have 200,000 people on it; we were not listened to and the demonstration was therefore planned for 25,000.

We feel that the movement has made great strides and is on the way to a historic victory. However, this has been entirely down to the dedication of activists in the local groups and federations. We need a national organisation which can give them effective support. For this reason, we think it is important not to abandon the national organisation as a lost cause. We must encourage it to develop a positive role as:

1. A provider of information (legal reports, regional briefings, etc.)
2. A co-ordinator of national events
3. A focus for the national media (but one which is responsive to the wishes of the movement)

We stand for a movement which:

values diversity - and encourages the involvement of all groups, factions and parties in the campaign, and individuals who have never been politically involved before.

stresses equally non-payment, non-prosecution and non-collection and avoids factional in-fighting over the emphasis of any one of these.

is grass roots - reflecting the movement on the ground. We believe the movement should be organised on a delegate basis, where delegates are accountable to their regions and are recallable.

defends those who are the victims of attack by the state; in particular, those arrested on the anti-poll tax demonstrations. We regret the statement by Steve Nally about "naming names". We do not feel this is the appropriate role of our movement. We should rather be putting the police on the defensive for their brutality.

THE BAILIFFS ARE COMING!

from RED ACTION

The fight against the Poll Tax is gaining a new momentum throughout the country. With the issuing of summonses to enable the councils to obtain liability orders, non-payers are being moved from a relatively passive position of withholding money and staging sporadic demonstrations against the tax, into a stage in which they are actively opposing the councils in the courts (their home ground) and in the community (our home ground). Although any movement of the scope and character of the Anti-Poll Tax Union movement can expect to receive a number of setbacks it is still the case that their problems are far greater than those that we face.

In the courts, the council have a very limited amount of time in which to obtain the liability orders they need in order to impose sanctions on non-payers. In a recent local case a man succeeded in prolonging his defence for 2½ hours! Given that councils generally have no more than a few days or afternoons to hear thousands of cases, it is obvious that they have a tough job on their hands if local Anti-poll Tax Unions organise sufficient people to turn up in person and prevent their cases from being rubber-stamped.

Where councils do obtain liability orders, they can proceed to deduct money from wages or income support (not pensions or other types of benefit). There are signs that unions are beginning to take a stand of behalf of their members threatened with wage arrestment. It is vital that unions are pressured in this way to protect the interests of their members. The council's other option, the one they are currently most likely to adopt, is to send in the bailiffs. Anti-Poll Tax Unions have a vital role to play here in countering the intimidatory effect that the threat of the bailiffs has for many people. There are in fact only 1,000 bailiffs in England and Wales, so they are liable to find their resources considerably over-stretched. And unlike Scotland, bailiffs here do not have any power to force entry into a person's home in any circumstances. If you do not let them in, they cannot get in, no matter how many times they may return. **Nonetheless where bailiffs are being used, it must be emphasised that these people are no better than thieves and muggers and must be treated by activists and the community as such.** When they go about their business of harassing and intimidating working class people, they must be made to know that the harassment and intimidation is not going to be one way. All activists should be organising now in their own areas to ensure that this is the case. Many people who have to this point merely been in sympathy with the Anti-Poll Tax movement will be willing to become more actively involved as they see direct assaults on their neighbours, relatives and friends homes being carried on in front of them. The potential to build active resistence to these contemptible collaborators of the Thatcher government and to build popular support for bailiff-busting activites and consequently the work and aims of the Anti-poll Tax movement generally, is enormous.

Beyond that, anti-poll tax activists can alert their communities to the inevitable cuts in services and jobs if the poll tax continues in place. For if the poll tax continues even in a ramshackle and crippled form, it remains a perfect vehicle for achieving the central purpose of the government in introducing it - the destruction of local government autonomy and services. It has to be realised that it is not the purpose of the government to make local government work more effectively or more cheaply. **It is their purpose to destroy the services that the councils at present provide - and this can be achieved whether or not the Poll Tax proves 'workable' in the terms of local authority Finance Officers.** If the poll tax did prove 'workable' (say a 90-95% collection rate), it is designed to force local authorities in successive years to either put up the poll tax to unrealistic and unpopular levels as the government steadily reduces the amount contributed to local finance from central funds, or, as will be the case, to cut local services and jobs to the point where they virtually cease to exist. But on the other hand, if local authorities get a proportion of the money they need (say 80 or even 90%), but are unable to collect the rest, which councils themselves would regard as proof of its being 'unworkable', there is a great danger that they will still be compelled by central government to drastically reduce the level of services and jobs they provide. Either way, the result will be much the same. The only option open to ordinary people in this country if they wish to maintain the system of local authority education, housing and welfare that most of us have grown up with, **is to defeat the poll tax decisively in the shortest possible time.** That means making sure that they don't get the money and that councils grind to a total halt forcing this government or the next one to introduce an alternative system of local finance immediately. The poll tax is the most ambitious and oppressive measure the Tories have yet passed. It has not unexpectedly also aroused the most widespread and organised opposition. We must do our utmost to ensure that this opposition is as effectively organised as possible at every stage. **WE'RE NOT PAYING!!**

On Sunday, 9th of September around 1,000 people marched to Alexandra Park. They accompanied 25 people on the first part of the 400 mile People's March to London. As well as these marchers, 25 people will also march from both Liverpool and the West Country to arrive in London on 20th October. The London Federation has agreed to organise a march to meet the marchers when they arrive and other events should be happening across the country on the 20th.

According to Tommy Sheridan the march is **"important to take the message from Glasgow to London and through the whole of Britain that Mrs. Thatcher's Poll Tax is not being accepted and will never be accepted"** (1). The march aims to overcome the **"conspiracy of silence fostered by the media to keep Scotland separate from the rest of Britain"** (2) and **"one of (its) most important features will be communication"** (3). Mr. Sheridan is confident that **"this march will be successful in eliminating the reason for marching"** (4) unlike the marches against unemployment to which the People's March had been compared.

Janette McGinn, one of the original marchers, said that **"I hope we can get across to people along the route of the march what a battle we've been having in Scotland and what successes we've had"** (5).

The Strathclyde Federation itself said **"The most important factor in maintaining opposition to the Poll Tax ...... has been the continual mobilisation against it. The 'People's March' .... is the next major event against the evil tax ...... (going through) every major town and city in England, Wales and Scotland with a clear message - THE POLL TAX MUST GO!"** (6).

Undoubtedly the need to get the facts to working class people across the country is essential, but an honest appraisal of the march, its ideas and method must be done in order to aid the discussion within, and development of, the Anti-Poll Tax struggle.

The People's March has been compared to the Hunger marches of the 1930's. Indeed Militant says that **"for the next 4 weeks, the Anti-Poll Tax movement will be treading in their footsteps"** (7) and quotes historian AJP Taylor's description of them as **"a propaganda stroke of great effect. The Hunger marchers displayed the failure of Capitalism in a way that mere figures or literary description could not"**. It concludes by saying **"it is the same visual message that the Poll Tax marchers will seek to emulate"** (Although they do not say how 75 tracksuited protesters can have the same "visual message" as 1,000 unemployed workers). As is the case now with the Poll Tax struggle, the TUC actively worked against the National Unemployed Workers Movement (NUWM) and the Hunger marches and the police attacked their rallies in London.

The PEOPLES Crawl

The NUWM and the Hunger marches did have an effect on the people involved as well as the country as a whole, but what sort? John Taylor Caldwell, the biographer of Guy Aldred, an anarchist active in Glasgow at the time of the marches, said **"everybody ...... felt the urge to join the threadbare horde on the great trek to London. (Guy) Aldred went against the stream in condemning this exploit. It was a ruse of the leaders to confirm their alleged leadership and advance their careers. They were mis-leading the workers. To march to London was to acknowledge the authority of London. To stand and shiver in rags before the House of Commons, begging for work, was to accept and affirm their status as wage slaves. He (Aldred) wanted places to be set aside in the parks where people gather and discuss social problems and gather strength to defy their exploiters not, like the marchers, acknowledge them ...... the Hunger marchers tramped their way into the mainstream of history, where their abjection is held in high regard."** (8)

This point was put forward by one of the speakers, at the send-off rally. Going much against the stream, he quoted both John MacLean and Guy Aldred speaking against sending people to London, be it M.P.s or workers, and instead urged people to organise at home.

The question is, how do you change things for the better. The strength of the NUWM was not the hunger marches but the organising of thousands of unemployed workers. The ruling class was frightened by the prospect of them being in an organised position to discuss their problems and act to change them in a more direct way than the hunger marches (which, like the unemployment marches in the early 80's, had a cross-class support).

Instead of appealing to or petitioning the state (be it Parliament or the local Council, which accustoms the working class to believing that salvation comes from above and not through its own actions) the working class must organise itself and fight where it is strongest; in the housing schemes and workplaces. Any demonstrations which call upon 'leaders' to fight for us (or the ruling class not to exploit us) puts back our struggles. As Errico Malatesta said **"The only limit to the oppression of government is the power with which the people show themselves capable of opposing it."** (9). That power, as the Poll Tax struggle so clearly shows, is based on organisation and direct action, not on 'People's Marches' or petitioning our rulers.

The People's March cannot be taken out of context. Ever since the Poll Tax riots of March 31st the underlying Labourism/reformism of Militant has come to the fore. In an attempt to appear "respectable" and not get totally expelled from the Labour Party, Militant, through its stranglehold over the AntiPoll Tax Federation, has been attempting to show the powers that be in the Labour Party (and elsewhere) that the AntiPoll Tax struggle will remain in the realms of "democratic" civil disobedience and not venture into the class struggle.

In order to be in a position to work within the Labour Party as a "leftwing" alternative, it cannot criticise that Party's inherent Capitalist nature or the role of the Council in the state and keep to slagging off the rightwing leadership (and thus building illusions in both of these). All through this campaign the Federation has appealed to the Council not to, firstly introduce the Poll Tax, use Warrant Sales and finally not to deduct money from benefits. These were all ignored. **The fight against the Poll Tax is as much against Labour as it is against the Tories. The sooner people realise this the better.**

At the time of the Hunger protest in July of this year a leaflet handed out said **"While (we) admire the dedication and sincerity of those involved .... we feel that it tends to encourage 'sympathy and pity' as opposed to 'solidarity and support' which is the backbone of the Anti-Poll Tax movement."** The same can be said for the People's March. The leaflet also gave its alternative to "appealing" to the Council as building **"resistance ...... in our communities and workplaces (to) by-pass the inactivity and scab mentality of 'our' Labour Council"**. (11) Again the same conclusion can be drawn. At the present time, with poindings around the corner, could not the energy, work and money (over £40,000) that has been put into the People's March have been used in a more productive way in the housing estates and workplaces of Britain strengthening the organisation and influence of the Anti-Poll Tax movement?

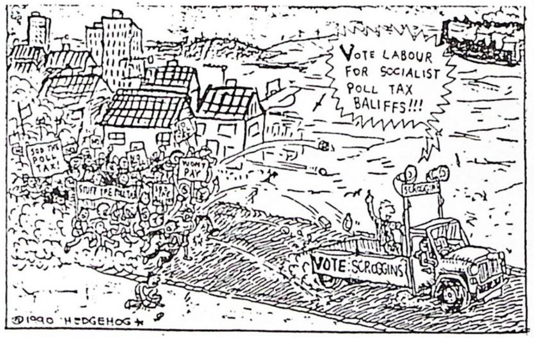
The People's March is seen as **"a way to get across to workers and undercut the press black out"** (12) but such a mobilisation as the People's March does not solve this problem. Instead of building an effective communication network which can give the real facts of working class struggle at all times, the People's March will only do this during the six weeks of its existence and would not draw in more people than any other meeting, tour or organising drive. Indeed it could be argued that such spectacular acts as the People's March could increase passivity and promote a "they'll do it for us" attitude which would kill the Anti-Poll Tax movement.

Fighting working class organisations are not built, nor survive on 'People's Marches' any more than petitions or appeals. They are created through direct action, struggle and self-organisation. We must learn the lessons of history and trust our own class experiences. The Poll Tax will be defeated by mass nonpayment and industrial action, not by symbolic gestures.

Iain (Pollokshields)

Iain (Pollokshields)

1. Militant 7.9.90 p.7
2. As Above
3. As Above
4. As Above
5. Militant 7.9.90 p.16
6. Strathclyde Federation leaflet for send off rally
7. Militant 7.9.90 p.17
8. Workers City, p.36-37, Clydeside Press 1988
9. An Anarchist Programme; Life and Ideas, Freedom Press, 1984
10. Direct Action Gets the Goods, Glasgow Anarchist Group 4.7.90
11. As Above
12. Militant 7.9.90 p.7



Towards a National Network

Numerous groups from around Britain have written to REFUSE & RESIST expressing a desire for greater cooperation and communication between Independant Groups (groups not dominated by Militant or any one political faction). Several individuals have also written, asking for information about groups in their own areas.

It is not the case, as some would argue, that the unity of the Campaign is being threatened by the existence of the Independants. Quite the contrary. The strength of the Campaign is dependant upon the support of everyone who is opposed to the Poll Tax, regardless of their political allegiances. Militant-dominated Federations and groups represent a great many of those who are against the Poll Tax. Independant groups also represent a great many people who are against the Poll Tax.

It is quite natural that various factions and tendencies exist, and that different ideas on how the fight against the Poll Tax should be waged will be expressed. With cooperation and communication between groups, each can learn from others' experiences, and provide support for one another when needed. The forthcoming Scottish Forum is a step towards such unity. The editorial team at R & R hopes that the following list of group contacts will be a step towards improved communications.

Please note that we have listed contacts for those groups that have come to our attention. Inclusion on the list does not indicate affiliation to R & R, or suggest that groups are in agreement with the various views expressed in the paper.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE YOUR GROUP LISTED IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF R & R SEND DETAILS TO:

P.O.BOX 239 GLASGOW G3 6RA.

GLASGOW & WEST of SCOTLAND

BARGEDDIE COLLEGE APT: Paul, SRC Office.
CUNNINGHAME: c/o G. Barr, 282 Dickson Dr. Irvine KA12 9HG.
DENNISTON: c/o 2/3, 182 Ark Lane Glasgow
GOVAN: 445-4330 & 440-0437
HAMILTON-BURNBANK: c/o D. Paton, 57 Dryden St. Hamilton.
IBROX/CESSNOCK: 427-3691/6398/4109
POLLOKSHIELDS: 423-0461 & 429-9015
POSSIL: 336-5359
ROYSTON: c/o Duncan, 16/6 40 Rosemount St. Glasgow.
STIRLING: 0786-61577
WOODLANDS: 332-8124/4728 & 333-9015

EDINBURGH & EAST of SCOTLAND

ABERDEEN: c/o Mair, 18 Tollohill Gdns. Aberdeen AB1 5DX.
ARMADALE: 32965
BATHGATE: 630471 & 52458
BLACKBURN: 54823 & 630871
BRIDGEND: 834733 & 834866
BROUGHTON/INVERLEITH: 031-556-0903
FAULDHOUSE: 71601 & 70456
GRANGEMOUTH: 0324-484344
LADYWELL: 35420
LINLITHGOW: 842022
KNIGHTSRIDGE: 33307(day) & 31637(night)
MARCHSTON/MORNINGSIDE: c/o S. Costa, 1c Maxwell St. Edinburgh EH10.
PERTH: c/o S. Lathen, 28 Edinburgh Rd.
PRESTONFIELD & DIST.: 031-668-3136
SEAFIELD: 632743 & 630502
SOUTHSIDE(EDINBURGH): 031-667-1507
STOCKBRIDGE & NEWTON: 031-332-7547
STONEYBURN: 62479
UPHALL: 855504
WHITBURN: 40979 & 40779

LONDON

TRAFALGAR SQUARE DEFENDANTS' CAMPAIGN: 071-883-8959
CAMDEN: 071-431-2760
CANNING TOWN: c/o 14 Teasel Way, W. Ham E15
CLAPHAM/BRIXTON: c/o 121 Railton Rd. Brixton
HACKNEY APT FED: 0426-911161
HACKNEY HECKLER: c/o 61 Leswin Rd. N16
HACKNEY-HOLMLEIGH RD: 809-7228
HACKNEY-PEMBURY: 985-7642
HARINGEY-GREEN LANES: c/o 72 West Green Rd.
HARINGEY-, HORNSEY & WOOD GREEN: c/o Box 40, 187 High Rd. N22.
HARINGEY-SOUTH HORNSEY: c/o 9 Oxford Rd. N4.
HARINGEY-TOTTENHAM: 081-802-9804
LAMBETH: c/o 2 Norfolk House, Rushcroft Rd.
STAMFORD HILL: 081-809-7228
VAUXHALL: c/o The Cafe, Bonnington Sq. SW8.

ENGLAND (EAST)

BASILDON: 0268-558016
BRECKLAND: 9762-651
CAMBRIDGE: c/o Grapevine Bookshop, Unit 6, Dales Brewery, Gwydir St., Cambridge.
COLCHESTER: 0206-863211
IPSWICH: 0473-713179
NORTH NORFOLK: 069260-6617
NORTH WEST NORFOLK: 0553-762566
NORWICH: 0603-618931
THETFORD: 0842-754471
WAVENEY: c/o R. Edwards, CPSA, DSS Rishton House, Clapham Rd., Lowestoft.

EAST MIDLANDS

NOTTINGHAM DEFENCE FUND: Box DF, 72 Radford Rd., Nottingham.
NOTTINGHAM-BEESTON: 0602-227892
FOREST FIELDS/HYSON GREEN: 0602-700230
NOTTINGHAM-RADFORD: 0602-780557
SHERWOOD: 0602-624827

WEST MIDLANDS

REDDITCH APT: 33 Leysters Close, Wingates.

ENGLAND (NORTH)

LEEDS APT FED: c/o Leeds Trades Club, Saville Mount, Leeds 7.
SHEFFIELD- NETHERIDGE APT: 589675
LIVERPOOL-WAVERTREE: 734-3145
MIDDLESBOROUGH: c/o 45 Athol St.
STOCKPORT-WYTHENSHAWE: c/o 20 Troutbeck Rd. Gatby, Stockport SK8 4RR.

ENGLAND (SOUTH)

AYLESBURY VALE: c/o Doug, 2 Delamre Close, Aylesbury, Bucks HP20 2BG.
AVON FED: 34 Belleview Rd. Easton, Bristol.
OXFORD: Box P, 34 Cowley Rd., Oxford.
PORTSWOOD (SOUTHAMPTON): c/o D. Carr, 27 Langhorn Rd, Swaythling & Portswood 556671
NEWTOWN: Local group info - 220642
SOUTHAMPTON: Local group info - 0703
SUSSEX PTRF: c/o 6 Tilbury Place, Brighton.
PLYMOUTH: P.O. Box 105, Plymouth.

WALES

CARDIFF-CANTON: c/o E. May, 34 Llandaff Rd.
CLWYD APT FED: P.O. Box 462, Rhyl LL18 1HQ.

INDIE Forum

The first 'Scottish Forum' for independent Anti Poll Tax groups and individuals took place in the Raploch, Stirling on 2nd June.

The Stirling group were hosts to activists from Aberdeen, Dundee, Glasgow, Edinburgh and the Lothians. Although a windswept day diminished the turnout, around 80 took part in 2 sessions of workshops and plenary discussions. Workshops included stopping Sheriff Officers, Refuse and Resist and effective network links.

Due to a misunderstanding, some Stirling activists opposed an Edinburgh proposal to establish a loose network to organise further conferences. SWP members from Alloa and Abbeyhill (Edinburgh) tried to exploit the confusion and staged a pathetic walk out.

Undaunted, a 2nd Scottish Forum is planned for the 27th October in Prestonfield, Edinburgh. Booking should be done immediately (Details back page).

REFUSE & RESIST

available from

FINANCIAL TIMES NEWSAGENT

2 West Nile Street

OPEN 24 HOURS

NOTTINGHAM REPORT

I've just had the morning off to attend the first court summonses for non-payment in Nottingham city itself. There's already been two Thursday sessions dealing first with Rushcliffe, then with Broxtowe : both were heard last month.

The first cases (Rushcliffe -(see enclosed* photocopy) were fairly successful in clogging up the system. They summonsed 120 people, and about twenty turned up. Because the court was ill prepared, and allowed "Mackenzies Friends" (ie. an adviser in the dock with the defendant), they ended up adjourning loads of cases until November. Broxtowe (a rabid Tory Borough) was less successful, and they obviously had learnt from Rushcliffe. They refused MF's (cue "Millies" whinging about "a denial of our democratic (sic) rights"), and got all 120 done. It's still just a drop in the ocean, though.

This is one of the crucial areas of the law that differs from Scotland. As I understand it, north of the border the council can issue it's own liability orders against people without recourse to the courts. That isn't the case here, where every defaulter (potentially) has to be processed through the Magistrates Courts. Obviously most people don't bother turning up, but even so the scope for fighting at yet another barricade before the crunch is fairly immense. Birmingham City Council have estimated that it will take about four years, and in Nottingham they have booked every Thursday of every week to hear cases. Estimates run at only about 10% of people going to court, but this still means 6-7,000 cases to be heard.

Today I managed to get in the public gallery, and the first case took over an hour. Once again they refused "Mackenzies Friends", but we expected that. They threw us out when we clapped the first bloke's effort, so that was the end of that. Even so, when I left at about 1 o'clock, they had only got through 2 or 3 cases from the morning session. It was great to see people coming out who had probably never been involved in anything before, and who had never been to court, standing laughing and chatting with people on the demo, and still determined not to pay.

One of the problems with this stage of the campaign is that the Left are putting the emphasis on it as the battle, as if it was a last ditch attempt to stop the tax. In reality, it's nothing more than a piece of paper to say you're liable, and everyone knew that already!! The real battle is yet to be fought, when the Council try to use the bailiffs and wage arrestments. Nevertheless, it's worth while making it as difficult as possible for them to get the liabilities in the first place.

Talking of bailiffs, they've been out and about in W.Bridgford, but so far have been chased off by a roving ad hoc patrol of bailiff busters. Looks like we might be getting CB's etc, and we've found out who and where the bailiffs are, so who knows what might happen ...... (watch this space!). Certainly this is all scare tactics, the Council know full well that they can't get the money out of 40,000 who have payed nothing, and a further 30,000 who have since defaulted, this way. And wage arrestments risks workplace organisation outside of union control which is great for us. Estimates of non-payment run at 150,000 in Nottinghamshire alone.

Bailiffs in England have more power than those in Scotland, but they're just as unpopular so I don't see them making much headway. The group in W. Bridgford managed to catch up with them a couple of times, but they avoided confrontation by driving off.

Friday 21/09/90

I went back to the courts after work yesterday, and they were still hearing cases at 5:30 pm. A hardcore of about a dozen people were still there, making a lot of noise to keep their spirits up. Mostly crappy SWP "we are THE Tory haters" type stuff. "Well, are you really, you mean you hate the Tories. And there was little ol' me thinking everyone loved them to bits". I even had an SWP member tell me in Leamington recently that "you shouldn't criticise Labour Councils"! As a comrade in Nottingham put it, they've gone so far down this line that even the most basic Trot politics has got lost in the mayhem. Bankrupt or what.

What else? Oh yes, the Beeston cases were heard at Bingham as well yesterday. They moved the 4,000 summonses out of Beeston to an obscure and little used court in Bingham, which is miles away, and told people the had to write for a personal hearing. But it didn't work as although only a few people turned up (understandably enough) it looks like nearly a thousand cases have been adjourned to November, to be heard in the city. The great thing about this is that the Beeston/Stapleford campaign now knows who has been summonsed (we had no idea 'till the day itself before, because needless to say they won't tell us in advance), so they can now get round to those people and encourage a couple of hundred or so to turn up.

WILL SCARLET

Anger in East Anglia

In Norwich alone 40,023 Red Letter reminder letters have been sent out. In Ipswich, South Norfolk, Cambridge, Great Yarmouth non-payment is over 30%.

A so-called 'Boom' area in the Thatcherite 80s, the Poll Tax revolt is drawn on class lines. As 2 pensioners in North Norfolk put it after Liability Orders were granted against them:-

"Houses with 10 or 12 rooms with people paying the same as I have to pay. It is totally unfair". (Cyril and Janice Chatten).

LABOUR LACKEYS

Recently Labour Councillors have been in the papers and on T.V. saying that local government services like home helps and pensioners bus passes will be cut because of the anti - Poll Tax campaign.
This is a cowardly lie!.

Services are under threat because;
•the government has reduced the amount it pays back to local authorities from general taxes
•The Poll Tax reduces the amount paid by the rich and big business when compared to the rates (and makes most of us pay more)
•The Poll Tax costs three times as much to collect as the rates.

The council knows all this and could have refused to collect it saying:
•the vast majority of working people in Britain are against it - it is undemocratic.
•poll tax makes the poor pay more and the rich pay less - it is a rich mans tax.
Despite this the Labour Council has sided with the Tories against the majority of working class people. Why?

For a start some of them will benefit from the Poll Tax or can easily afford it.
Also they wish to appear "moderate" and "sensible" so as not to frighten off the yuppie vote. They would rather attack the poor and the principled. They don't want to risk their nice careers and perks by breaking a law no matter how terrible.

The abolition of slavery, the right to vote, the right to education, health and other social sevices, were won by ordinary people who when neccessary broke the law. Those workers on strike in the oilfields demanding safe working conditions to prevent another Piper Alpha disaster are breaking the law.
There is nothing particularly, moral, democratic or clever about obeying an unpopular law.

The Poll Tax is a direct attack on our living standards and our communities and we have the absolute right to defend ourselves and those around us. The anti - Poll Tax campaign stands in the proud tradition of fighting for democracy and against injustice.

The Labour Council blame others for the results of their own cowardice Like the bullies they are, they threaten us with warrant sales, wage and bank arrestments. But these have proved to be empty threats. Lothian Region has sent out 406,000 reminders and the Sheriff's Officers 186,000 Summary Warrants, yet here we are in October 1990 and there have been no warrant sales in Scotland. and only a handful of bank and wage arrestments.

To the Regional Council we say you are corrupt and cowardly. Resign! To the Sheriff's Officers we say, we are many, we are organised and we are waiting for you!

BOB (Prestonfield & Dist. Comm. Resistance to the Poll Tax)

UNWANTED

17 Partick/ Anderston — Malcolm Green
28 Drumoyne/ Govan — Ian Davidson
30 Mosspark/ Bellahouston — Helen McElhone
77 Paisley Central — John Mullin
48 Chryston & Kelvin Valley — Charles Gray

Know Your Regional Councillor

For over two and a half years the Anti poll tax movement has been telling Lothian Labour councillors that sooner or later they would face the choice of setting an unaffordable poll tax or decimating jobs and services. Now, when they are going to set a poll tax of over £500 and cut jobs and services, they have the cheek to blame those who are refusing to pay this rich man's tax. THIS IS A COWARDLY LIE

The truth is that the poll tax is high because,
- It reduces the amount of tax paid by the rich and big business.
- The Tories have slashed the money available to local authorities to maintain basic services in order to privatise them.
- The Poll Tax costs much more to administer than the rates.

Lothian Regional Council now tells us that Warrant Sales will be used against those who are refusing to pay

THERE HAVE BEEN NO WARRANT SALES IN SCOTLAND SO FAR, NOR WILL THERE BE AS LONG AS PEOPLE SUPPORT EACH OTHER.

LETTERS

Dear R & R,

We would like to thank you for your very full and informative report from Scotland - it did us a world of good to know that the fight in Scotland still is so strong against the hated tax.

Our campaign has been going through a lull and are now only just beginning to pick up again with the beginning of court cases around the country. Many of these court cases (South Tyneside, Isle of Wight) ended in fiasco because the authorities did not observe the rules and regulations sufficiently and were caught out by the Anti-Poll Tax campaigns. However, there are still a few lunatic Tory areas such as Northampton which have learnt from their mistakes and are pushing full steam ahead to grind these campaigns into the ground. However, as far as we can ascertain, they have not been able to get Bailiffs into many houses (One instance reported was that the Bailiffs looked through the windows in order to mark up goods - I think that fell through because it is impossible to ascertain whether the goods belong to the people concerned).
Locally we now have over 35 campaigns in Nottinghamshire and about 25 or so in Nottingham itself. The newer campaigns have had an invigorating effect on the older ones and in many cases are large, with over a thousand members.

As far as Nottingham City is concerned, we in Sherwood have just had reminders and are waiting for the court summonses in 2 weeks time. They have decided to pick a few people here and there rather than do a blanket coverage of a whole area. The other parts of the City are being done later. We had a good public meeting of 50-60 people, many of whom had reminders and all of whom were prepared to go to Court if necessary. We are now in the process of priming people up so that they know what they are doing and also don't lose heart. We are also scouring the area to find out all the people who have reminders and are likely to receive summonses.

Together we'll beat this hated tax!

Ivan Wels (Convenor, Sherwood and District Anti Poll Tax Campaign)

Cont. from P.3

On previous occasions we had no difficulty in securing Labour speakers. This recent reticence to share a platform with AAPT reflects a growing intolerance towards non-payers.

Grampian in common with all Scottish local authorities has experienced an increase in non-payment this year. The Region will not divulge the number of those not paying, but will only reveal the shortfall in their anticipated income. Since Labour joined the coalition with the SLD the ritual statements against the Poll Tax have dried up. Our two MPs, Doran and Hughes, never mention it, although there is no stopping their 'cleck and blaw' on every other topic. Increasingly, dissidents within the local party are coming under pressure. Electability is the buzz word as affinity cards and monogrammed mugs become the new emblems of Socialist cred. Rather than 'Forward with Labour' the new slogan should be 'Back to the Future'. The fight continues.

Charlie (Aberdeen APT)

West End Park St.,
GLASGOW. G3

Dear Refuse & Resist,

I have just finished reading 'Refuse & Resist' No. 4. It is both entertaining and enlightening. However, this base of those who are unhappy with the way Militant are conducting themselves in this campaign (and Militant's politics in general) can fall into a dangerous trap.

The personal tirades, however emotionally justified, must be truthful and accurate. We must not allow the media to find their 'information' from sources fighting the Poll Tax. Rumours, misinformation, and malicious lies are the ultimate breeding ground of sectarianism. In the process of looking for a "juicy" piece on Tommy Sheridan for instance. The story may, if it exists, one or two must do so. (I am sure they do for everybody The enemy can make use of this type of dirt, even make it up themselves, to make us look foolish.

I would stick to the political mistakes of our comrades in the Federation, but let us not play a game of Tennis with political mistakes. Let serious work and political exposure continue. Mistakes can be rectified. Treating the "enemy within" like scum falls into hands of reactionaries. There are those in the Militant who must learn this lesson as well.

Fraternally Yours,

Paul Anderson

BADGES AVAILABLE FROM

ABERDEEN
AGAINST THE POLL TAX
TELEPHONE HOTLINE
625562

Guy,
112 Derby Rd.,
Newtown,
Southampton.

Dear R. & R.,

Could you please send me details of the October march against the Poll Tax, as there are a number of us who went up in March who are finding it difficult to obtain information from the Militant-dominated Federation. We intend to book a coach and sell tickets.

In addition, could you send us copies of R. & R., so far we've seen up to No. 4. We will send you a donation at a later date.

As an Independent Anti-Poll Tax union in Southampton we feel quite isolated and we wonder if you could tell us what attempts have been made to unite and or facilitate connections between these groups.

Yours in Struggle,

Martin

For Guy on behalf of Newtown APTU

Box Dam,
48 Bethel St.,
Norwich,
Norfolk.

Dear R. & R.,

Thanks for paper which has been distributed here. First Class. Thought you might like clippings from East Anglian area. All are from Eastern Daily Press, a Tory rag (but what isn't?)

All the best,

John Ball

Dear R & R,

I enclose £10 to help cover costs of papers I got at Stirling.
Almost every response I found (with exception of Militants, of course) was in favour of R & R view of the London and Glasgow demos in March. I have found that people like the very straightforward approach of R & R to the issues involved, which runs up against, and is in direct opposition to, the various political careerists and would-be bureaucrats who are out to make a name for themselves.

?FY (Dundee)

T-SHIRTS AVAILABLE FROM R & R PRICE £4 plus 75p P&P. ALSO CAN'T PAY:WON'T PAY:DON'T PAY CAR STICKERS: 75p plus P&P or DISCOUNT FOR BULK ORDERS!!!!!

Down With Poll Tax

Down With All Taxes

The Poll Tax may be unfair, even on capitalist terms, but that is not the reason we oppose it. We oppose it for the same reason we oppose increases in rent, mortgates and electricity, etc. We oppose it because it is an increase in our cost of living and an attack on our living standards.

We support street organisation of workers resisting the tax, but we think to be successful this struggle must not be confined there, but needs to extend into the workplace - which is where we are at our strongest.

One way is to whack in large pay demands to take account of the Poll Tax bills. But many of us who are pensioners, unemployed etc, don't have that option.

If a widespread struggle gets underway, based on workplaces and localities, it should include social demands like higher pensions and dole, as well as common wage demands. A good example of this was in Poland a couple of years ago, when striking workers included in their demands raises for some of the sections of the working class who can't easily strike, such as health workers.

In the present climate that kind of extension of the struggle is difficult, but it needs to be done.

Subversion 2, Box W, c/o Raven Press, 75 Picadilly, Manchester M1 2BU

c/o Box A,
October Books,
4c Onlow Rd.,
Southampton.

Dear Refuse & Resist,

We are a fledgling group of Class Struggle Anarchists. I am writing to tell you about the appalling state of the AntiPoll Tax movement in our part of the world, and to ask for help in remedying it.

The Southampton Federation isn't Militant dominated - it's the Southampton branch of Militant!

After the Battle of Trafalgar the three strong unions in the inner cities got fucked off with similar statements to Nally and Sheridan in the local press and the general running of things in the city. These unions disaffiliated.

The Federation now consists of about 15 bogus unions, whose membership is usually about 2, both Millies, who have elected each other to the Federation sovereign body. The itself is basically a collection of people who agree with Liz Saviour of the oppressed Filer and about 3 or 4 other particularly loathsome creatures (One heard to say: a) on a picket line to an anarchist "The difference between you and me is that you haven't realised that the working class isn't yet capable of looking after itself and needs people like me to do it for them", b) to someone after a Public Meeting - "Isn't it great when you're telling people what they want to hear - having them eat out of your hand" and c) claiming in the press that he was responsible for the Isle of Wight victory). This is sole deciding body of the Fed. Rank-andfile members have no vote. The Fed. withold vital information from us and has done buggerall campaigning work except party-building. They have all the fund and info, leaving the independent unions fairly ineffective at the moment. Their public meetings are low key affairs, with no building done and are very Stalinist (or should I say Marxist Leninist) to make clear to the troops that this is their style of organisation too affairs with Liz Filer carefully choosing speakers and having a clever policy of making any opposition from us appear to be trouble-making and devisive.

Now the independent unions are trying to recuperate months of setbacks, which is where hopefully you can help. The Anarchist Group has decided to call a Public Meeting on dealing with bailiffs, since all the Fed. ones have basically lied to us and totally avoided the subject of Public Order situations arising, and totally failing to pre-organise anti bailiff tactics.

We were hoping you could provide a speaker for this meeting. Maybe in a purely opportunistic move they could comment on the sterility of centralist organisation and the effectiveness of grass-roots control and the immense creativity of a selfactive working class body to coincide with us leafletting the members of the public with some of the facts behind the Fed. We were hoping this could take place soon after the October 20th demo in London. Food and accommodation could be provided and hopefully transport costs if we can get the independent unions to support the meeting.

Thanks anyway for keeping us hopeful knowing there is still some effective resistance to the tax and its instigators. In the hope of peace (after the final conflict) and an autonomous self determining society based on equal participation, and free co-operation if you know what I mean.

Yours hopefully,

Dave

Glasgow News

Federation Conference

The sixth conference of the Strathclyde Anti-Poll Tax Federation was attended by 133 delegates from 37 community groups and 3 Trade Union branches, at the Moir Halls, Glasgow.

After the usual rhetoric the conference got underway. The session was split into two, the discussion of the Executive statement, motions/amendments and elections and then a legal question and answer session with Gordon Dangerfield followed by a closed section on Sheriff Officer activity. There was also a speaker from the Off-Shore Industry Liaison Committee and Glasgow District Nalgo.

There were no speakers against the E.C. statement or amendments (although the Pollokshields motion was withdrawn due to their delegates thinking that it had been met by the Federation organising transport to the London march on October 20th). It was agreed to have a "day of protest" outside the Procurator Fiscal's office in Clyde St. on October 19th as Strathclyde's part of the international day of solidarity with the Trafalgar Square defendents.

The best parts of the day were the speakers from NALGO, OILC and Solicitor and Dumfries APT activist Gordon Dangerfield (who covered a wide range of topics). The closed section about the Sheriff Officers was postponed due to time considerations, to the next Aggregate on October 10th. This will discuss the continuing action against the Sheriff Officers and, as such, it is essential that as many people as possible go from all groups. According to the police, the "rules had now changed" and would arrest and charge any protesters involved in occupations, surveillence or stopping Sheriff Officers. This due to pressure by Sheriff Officers and the higher officials in the state.

In conclusion, the conference was disappointing, not because of the low turnout (which can be attributed to other factors than "nothing is happening"), but because it seems that the Federation conferences are becoming more sterile. The level of discussion and original ideas, was low (although if the closed section did happen then maybe this would not have been the case).

I cannot help thinking that to a great extent the Federation (and to a lesser extent the local groups) are structured in such a way that input of "ordinary people" is limited and that the atmosphere of Federation meetings **does** put people off getting involved.

The best responses so far have been in those conferences with workshops in which people **directly** discuss the issues. A step in the right direction would be converting the whole conference into a series of workshops with decision making plenary sessions (as opposed to "debating" motions to a statement drawn up by a small minority). Only continuous debate and **free** discussion can involve people in the **popular, direct** decision making needed for any **real** working class fighting organisation. Unfortunately, the Federation, as it is structured now, does not, I think, promote this.

Iain (Pollokshields)

Gloves Off

On 6 August Sheriff Officers were attacked in Bellshill outside Lanarkshire when they attempted to carry out poindings in the homes of Poll Tax non-payers. 50 people surrounded their car, shouting etc. The car was damaged with "clubs" smashed in the body work with chairs. They couldn't bother coming back a few days later when 100 protesters turned up to prevent any poindings physically stop poindings planned in the homes in the area.

After the first day, 50 Poll Tax protesters besieged the sheriff officers in the sheriff pay

WE'RE NO PAYING THE POLL TAX !

officers responsible. The police forced their way in and arrested them, causing thousands of pounds worth of damage.

Fortunately, Strathclyde Police Force has had to be cut because of non payment of the Poll Tax. Another blessing great means not to

No Poll Tax Figures

In Glasgow for last year, the official non-payment figure is 45.6%. In Strathclyde the figure is 1 in 3 for 1990's Poll Tax. After 18 months in Scotland, between 1¼ and 1½ million people have not paid. In the U.K. as a whole that figure is 14 million. At the Strathclyde Federation it was stated that 72% had not paid this year's Poll Tax in Scotland. With these high levels of non-payment, what has been the effect on bills and the Council.

In Central Region only £11 from an £84 increase in Poll Tax was due to non-payment. In Strathclyde, of a total Council short-fall in money of £175 million only £62 million was due to non-payment. These figures clearly show that it isn't non-payment that is causing Council cuts and vast increases in the Poll Tax. These are due to the Poll Tax's nature. As was pointed out at the start of the non-payment campaign, the Poll Tax would increase greatly every year as well as causing the Council to cut services. We were right then, we're still right now.

If you really want to see Council services not cut or the Poll Tax bills get bigger then join the non-payment campaign. Only getting rid of the Poll Tax will mean lower bills and more services.

No Poll Tax here, you know it makes sense!

Iain (Pollokshields)

Pollokshields Group Report

Things in the 'Shields have been quite quiet. We have had two successful Public Meetings at which we agreed to affiliate to the Trafalgar Square Defence Campaign (T.S.D.C.), organise street stalls and pub collections as well as updating and improving our phone tree. This last point was seen to be essential and, as such, we will be giving this priority before our next public meeting. This meeting, as well as having a speaker from the Strathclyde Federation on poindings, will be our Annual General Meeting and will be held on Wednesday, 31st October at 8.00 p.m. in the PDA Halls, McCulloch St. We are also twinning with a group in Bolton after Mick from our group spoke at 3 Public Meetings in Bolton during the summer.

MICK (Pollokshields)

Strathclyde Fed. Aggregate

At the Federation Aggregate on 12th September at Glasgow Tech, the Springburn/Royston delegate reported that Sheriff Officers had been seen in Royston and they had visited, mostly, single parents. Fortunately they did not try any poindings and just left letters saying they "had called but nobody was in". Royston was organising a Public Meeting in the area.

In Mount Florida and Paisley, it seems that the Sheriff Officers are "testing the waters".

Also Yoker and Spittal A.P.T.U.'s reported that their respective Resource Centres had cancelled their meetings due to local Labour Party pressure (local Councils hold the purse strings for Resource Centres).

Iain (Pollokshields)

'RANT & RAVE'

Lenin Lives - Well Almost!

Two members of the CPGB (Leninist) were sent to Glasgow to join the People's March. Despite having a lot in common, Militant members treated them like lepers and the 'Comrades' were forced to walk 10 paces behind the rest. Not to be outdone, our 2 Leninist friends decided that they wou'd cover every lamp post between Glasgow and London with their infantile 'Lenin Lives' stickers. The local plod took exception and charged them with 'Breach of the Peace' and the ancient by-law of the mid 70's 'Litter'. We hope the bug isn't catching!

Hop On, Hop Off

We hear that some people have been doing more marching than others on the "People's March". Rumour has it that the accompanying van has been in constant demand since it left Glasgow. On leaving a town, 'Marchers' have been piling into the van, driving to within a couple of miles of the next town and 'marching' into address the next welcoming rally! One of the few non-'Militants' from Glasgow on the March gave up, scunnered by the control by Militant cadres of all events.

Expelled

It seems that Militant have enraged local people once again, as a result of their limelight seeking activities! A letter appeared in the Bournemouth Echo claiming all of the work of the local Anti-Poll Tax group was led and inspired by Militant - the writer was of course, a Militant member. East Dorset Against the Poll Tax were so amused that they voted to exclude Militant members from meetings. Not that it made much difference - they hadn't been attending for months anyway!

R. & R. Goes Awol

'America Today' reports that a group of G.Is have have decided that the war in the gulf is not for them. The forward thinking Marines have formed a group called - wait for it - REFUSE AND RESIST! Now where have I heard that before?

Collective Amnesia afflicted Jim Cameron and other Strathclyde Fed. executive members at the Aggregate on 10th October. Angela from Possis APT reminded the meeting at the end of the Aggregate that the 30th national day of action against Bailiffs and Sheriffs was supposed to have been the main topic. Memory was restored, leading Militants such as Councillor Chick Stevenson and a clone acting as Minute Secretary said we must scale down our action. Earlier another 'Militant' said Charlie Gray, Region Labour leader wasn't so bad after all.

Oops!

A recent print run of the "No Sheriffs Here" Poster in Strathclyde contained a contact phone number which was unfamiliar. On telephoning, it was revealed that it was the number of Militant's office in Glasgow, not the Federation shop. Go on give 'em a bell - 041 331 2424. Tommy's waiting for your call!

Militantspeak (Again!)

"It was an unprovoked attack by the Police ..... the Metropolitan Police started the whole thing ..... but some people took advantage of the family atmosphere".

Jim Cameron (Chair, Strathclyde Fed. at the recent conference)

Baby Talk

"I saw a fire extinguisher thrown from the scaffold and smash through a baby's pram".

Tommy Armageddon (Strathclyde Aggregate, April 1990)

Firing Blanks

"Firefighters from F.B.U., a union which supports this Federation, had slabs of concrete and scaffold thrown down on top of them".

Tommy Armageddon (Strathclyde Aggregate, April 1990)

"When the fire engines came, it was a moment of calm, the crowd parted to let them through ..... that was the most peaceful part of the riot".

Eyewitness speaking on Despite TV's Battle of Trafalgar"

Yoof!

"The youth will be working all the nightshifts under the sun!"

Kirsteen Walker (Strathclyde Federation Yoof! Officer)

Will the Real Josef Stalin Stand Up?

We hear that the guest speaker at the recent Morning Star rally in Govan was none other than our own commissar for the Poll Tax, Tommy Armageddon. Tommy (or 'Uncle Tommy' as he's now known to the comrades) opened with "The Morning Star is the only daily paper to give coverage to Fed. etc. etc." You know what they say Tommy - "It takes one to know one!

International News

Barney In Berne

"Maggie To Hell" were the sentiments of an Anti-Poll Tax mob in Berne, Switzerland in a noisy protest against a visit by Thatcher. 20 were arrested.

All Black

Reports from New Zealand suggest one of the Conservative Parties want to introduce a Poll Tax. The Maoris will be on the warpath.

Pole-Axed

Counter Information (Sept./October '90) has photos of a Polish protest outside the British Embassy.
(send SAE to CI,11 Forth St., Edinburgh)

LONDON DEMO SAT. 20th OCTOBER

The Trafalgar Square Defence Committee have organised a feeder march which will assemble at 9.30am at HORSEFERRY ROAD MAGISTRATES COURT (Westminster, off Lambeth Bridge) before joining the main march which assembles at 10.30am at KENNINGTON PARK.

The route chosen by the T.S.D.C. will take marchers near the seat of power (though south of the river) unlike the route of the Federation march which will go to BROCKWELL PARK near BRIXTON for a rally between 1.00 & 4.00pm.

The T.S.D.C. also plan a rally outside BRIXTON PRISON at 4.30pm. A number of jailed Trafalgar Square protestors are being held, and where a number of Jail "suicides" have taken place.

Second Scottish Forum

Saturday the 27th. of October 1990. The venue will be Cameron House Community Centre in Prestonfield, Edinburgh. This facility has disabled access, also, a creche and food will be available. A nearby pub - venue for the social.

Timetable (proposed)

10.30 a.m.	Tea & Coffee, settling in.
11.00 a.m.	Welcome
12.00 noon	Workshops.
1.30 p.m.	Lunch
2.30 p.m.	Workshops.
4.00 p.m.	Teabreak
4.15 p.m.	Reports from workshops.
4.45 p.m.	Final session
6.00 p.m.	Evening meal
7.00 p.m.	Social.

Proposed Workshops

1. Communications - To include a discussion of Refuse & Resist
2. Trafalgar Square Defence Campaign - How they organised
3. Sheriffs' Officers Actions (regional variations in tactics)
4. Direct Actions and Demo's.
5. Local Organisation and distribution of leaflets - the practicalities.
6. The Politics of Debt

Please make cheque payable to SCOTTISH FORUM, and send to Prestonfield Community Resistance, C/o Geoff Craig, 7 Spence St., Edinburgh, EH16 5AG

3D

3D—Don't pay, Don't collect, Don't implement—is a paper and network for anti-poll tax activists, both in or out of the All Britain Federation. It provides an independent voice in the anti-poll tax movement, information, reports and a critical viewpoint on events happening around the country.

For more info contact:
3D, c/o 11, Springfield Road
London N15 4AY

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REFUSE & RESIST is a FREE publication and, as such, it is dependant on donations from groups and individuals.

PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY!!!

POLL TAX RIOT

Acab Press
BM 8884
London WC1N 3XX

Dedicated to all working class heroes

£1 + S.A.E. (large). 24/[illegible]

10 hours that shook Trafalgar Square

On Saturday 31st March 200,000 people took to the streets of London to demonstrate against the Poll Tax. This demonstration ended up with a riot in the centre of London. Hundreds of police officers were injured and there were mass looting sprees throughout the West End. The day after, the capitalist media came down like a ton of bricks in an attempt to reimpose their reality, portraying the rioters violence as sheer mindless lunacy and trying to hide the much wider support it had amongst the working class. What follows is an alternative reality, the story from the other side, the people on the streets. Now read on...

After we have met our costs, all proceeds from the sale of this pamphlet will go to defendants and the defendants' campaign.

This pamphlet is anti-copyright and can be freely reproduced by any revolutionary group. But copyright protects it from being used by journalists, rich bastards, etc.

June 1990

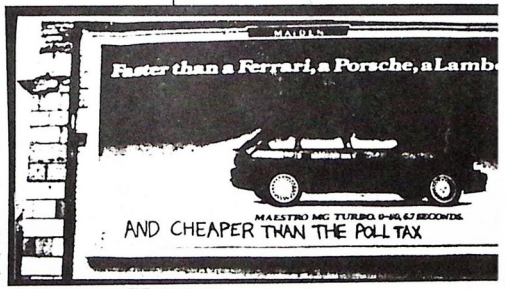
The Destruction of Toytown U.K.

The above pamphlet is a random collection of thoughts instigated by the great Poll Tax riot of March 31st, 1990. It ranges from on-the-spot observations by participants, to a wider theoretical reflection.

£1 from BM Blob, London WC1N 3XX

"Twinned Against The Poll Tax"

Any Scottish Anti-Poll Tax group who would like to twin with an English Anti-Poll Tax group to exchange experience, information, ideas etc. Write to Twins, c/o Robert Fox, 26 Glen St., Toll Cross, Edinburgh EH3.



CONTACTS

STOP PRESS: For last minute information or details of events requiring coverage by the editorial team call - 041 423 8679 or 427 6398

All articles, letters and donations to:-

P.O.Box 239 Glasgow G3 6RA

T/SOR/3/8/8/1

REFUSE AND RESIST.

NEWS FROM LOCAL ANTI-POLL TAX GROUPS

ISSUE No.6 PRICE: BY DONATION FIRST QUARTER 1991

IT'S WAR

Defeat The Poll Tax

"Smash The Tories"

"No Poll Tax Here"

"No War But The Class War"

March will see two of the largest demos so far against the Poll Tax. These demos mark the continuing success of our declared war on the Tories and their Poll Tax.

Thousands will march in Glasgow, whilst tens of thousands will take to the streets of London. The message of the ordinary people at these demos will be that the real war is at home - against Capitalism!

As thousands line up in the Gulf to be used as the cannon fodder of imperialism - hundreds of thousands more will be waging war on the streets against Major, Heseltine, Hurd and the boss class that they represent.

Despite some lulls in the Poll Tax campaign, non payment continues to grow. In areas of Glasgow non-payers are firmly in the majority. Areas of London report 50% non payment figures. North and south, working class people have recognised that the real war is the class war. Bailiffs have been busted in England, and in Scotland the sheriffs are shagged out by the level of harrassment they receive from the local communities they have targetted. We must ensure that their lack of success is sustained. Where the official Fed. leadership fail to mobilise - then we have to be prepared to take up the challenge.

Last year's London demonstration led to battles on the streets and the political frame up of hundreds of anti-poll tax activists by the police. At times, the official rantings of the Fed. leadership only helped the police.

Whatever happens this year at the demos..... let's ensure that there is maximum unity about who is to blame for the level of anger that exists towards the Poll Tax.

It is the same people who are gleefully looking forward to an all out war in the Gulf that have been waging an all out war upon us - it is the Tories who were responsible for last years riots; it is they who continue their violence against the working class - whether it be in the shape of the poll tax or war in the Gulf.

Kidder (Dennistoun)

Council Gets Red Card

For the 3rd year running, the Lothian Council meeting on 28th January to set the new Poll Tax was disrupted by independent anti-poll tax activists.

In a restricted gallery, the Council reluctantly agreed to 4 deputations against the poll tax. The Federation speaker Andy Clachars spoke and then exited stage left with his henchmen. Two speakers from Prestonfield and Sciennes-Marchmont each gave rousing calls for the abolition of the tax, an amnesty for non-payers, and for a Labour Council to stop using the threat of Warrant Sales against working class people.

The last speaker, from Stockbridge, then opened up:- "We're here to blow the whistle on you and give your Council the red card". At this signal all 15 got up vigorously using whistles and brandishing red cards. After conferring with Labour Leader Eric Milligan, the Chief Inspector sent in a police 'snatch squad' to apprehend the last speaker. The gallery was cleared and 4 arrested by officials in blue serge who get truncheon vouchers from the council.

The crowd then descended on the Polis station with instantly made up banners: "Free the 4". Two hours later Gary from Prestonfield, Colin from Sciennes/Marchmont, and Oliver and Mike from Stockbridge were released after being charged with "Breach of the Peace". S.T.V. covered the action. The 1991/2 Poll Tax was set at £584 for Edinburgh - even with £20 million cuts!

Tiny Wharton

OkBlok, October 22

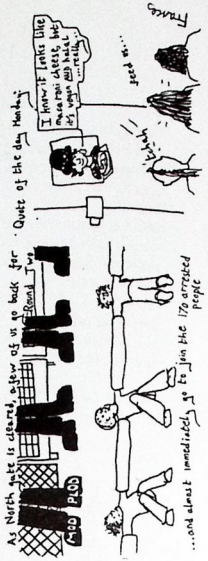
We were in a four-person affinity group for the OkBlok blockade of Faslane. It was my first blockade against Trident, and it was really nerve-wracking as I didn't know what to expect. We arrived at about 6.45 am and there were already loads of police about. We went to march up from the car park and the police tried to make us go on the footpath. This would have been funny as there were two wheelchair users in our group, and with all the police loitering and their transport parked on the kerb we would have run over quite a few police feet and scratched their vans. So we continued on the road, marched and wheeled round the traffic island and quickly went for North Gate and locked on in the road. At this point there were a lot of people around, everybody doing their own thing with lots of music and singing. Oh, and I didn't see any politicians so they will not be mentioned in this article as they have had enough press already.

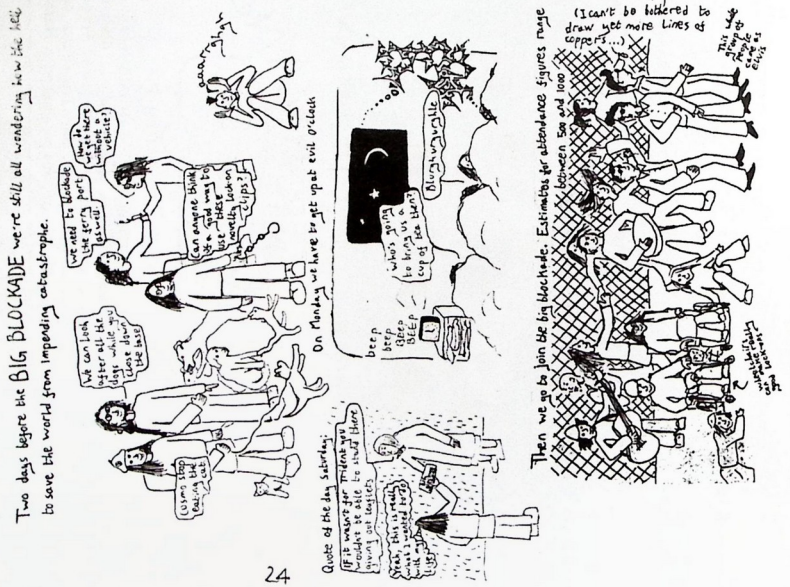
About two hours later the police arrived to remove the first group that had taken North Gate. We were pulled this way and that – I didn't realise we were there for them to practice tug of war. But then what should happen than the batteries on their revolving saws started to run out. Oh dear. The well-prepared police did not have enough batteries to cut the last of us loose. If you ever lock on under a wheelchair it's good to use big heavy tubes, but be careful. The police decided to practice some different sawing techniques on our arm tubes and some nasty cuts were given.

Then we were led away and the process of processing us all began. Sam was taken to van and put on a ramp that got stuck half way up and the police had to lower the ramp again and try to make it work. Apparently at the police station they could not take his fingerprints because the fingerprint room was not wheelchair-accessible. The women were taken to Kilmarnock police station, and I heard after we were released that it used to be one of the worst in the area. But I've been in a lot of police stations and so far I think it's one of the nicest.

Looking forward to seeing you all on the "block and Roll" from the 11th- 13th of February.

Sue Brackenbury





Apologies for no Radical Routes report this time. Watch next issue! Instead, this:

DARK NIGHT OF THE LADYBOYS

Four years ago, Faslania Housing Co-op was born, as an idea to set up a permanent and lasting alternative to the conflict-based way the world works, and to protest against Trident in particular. Until we actually get a piece of land and/or building, it remains little more than just a dream, but Faslania is part of Radical Routes, a national network of housing co-ops. Four times a year, there is a national gathering of all the co-ops, and it was Faslania's turn to host last autumn's one, which took place at Kinning Park, Glasgow at the end of October.

People started arriving on Friday evening and we all started getting to know each other over dinner. The gathering really got started on Saturday morning, with a day of workshops for those new to Radical Routes, or who just wanted to learn more about something, for example consensus decision making, at the same time as meetings were held to discuss business. Most of us were too busy working to attend any workshops, although I was at the consensus decision making one and yet again I realised how shit we are at camp at that.

Saturday night saw the party, opened, of course, by Lummox. (Lummox are obligatory at any peace camp gig, plus quarter of the band are members of Faslania!). Two *good* bands followed, then some bloke on the decks. Then some freak from Talamh started banging a drum, then some scouse git joined in, and soon everyone was dancing at their end of the room. The deck bloke then realised there was no point him being there, and packed up and went home! (Sorry.)

All the while, about half the men were dressed as women, some rather sexy I must say, and a few women as dapper young men.

Sunday lunchtime saw the final meeting, before everyone started heading off home, and we and the malingerers cleaned up the building.

I think a good time was had by all.

Thankfully we didn't have to do everything, as certain co-ops take on responsibility to do certain things. Well done to everyone who did anything to make it work, especially the kitchen crew, at least one of whom hardly left the kitchen, and to Lynn.

Tim.

TIGER
Aug 2001-
Dec 2001.
The most beautiful cat in the world. He got hit by a car and died. We buried him up the back.
Tiger-
I love you,
Forever.

T/SOR/3/5/8/1

REFUSE AND RESIST.

NEWS FROM LOCAL ANTI-POLL TAX GROUPS

ISSUE No. 7 SPECIAL EDITION Price: By DONATION May 1991

GLASGOW FIGHTS *BETTER!*

Strathclyde continues to lead the way in Non-Payment, especially centred on Glasgow. Figures for the 2nd year of mass defiance show 35% non-payment for Strathclyde, although Lothian is more uniformly resistant at 33%.

With £130 million uncollected added on to the massive shortfall for the first year from 1989, cuts in central funding, the effects of business rates & the pitiful recovery rate by way of arrestments (with nil for warrant sales), the Region is carrying out cuts in community projects & blocking replacement recruitment.

Such is the level of chaos that the first round of £70 million cuts is to be increased & headlines have appeared with Chief Labourite Charles Gray threatening **NO WAGES.** Far from ushering in an end to money, wages & profits as urged by early socialists, Gray & his cronies are hitting the workers at the bottom end of the job ladder. Even previously compliant 'direct debit' payers, over 22,000, had scrapped payment when Heseltine announced the Poll Tax was to be replaced.

Desperately turning from the wage arrestments already inflicted on Regional & District employees, the Region has been stitching up a deal with Pat Lally & his gang of rogues to pass on lists of all those on Housing Benefit to cross-check with lists of payers. Income Support arrestments are still proceeding but local APT groups are urging claimants to Appeal to have benefit reinstated and the system clogged up.

Meanwhile the press, & assorted liberal do-gooders like the SNP leadership are trying to exert "moral pressure" on the 'Can Pays' to pay up. But that leaves unanswered:
when is a **CAN'T PAY AMNESTY TO BE ANNOUNCED;**
when are the Prisoners going to be released & all other charges **DROPPED?;**
when are the Sheriffs going to be told by the Region, 'sorry no business'.

Jim McFarlane, 'Refuse & Resist'

DAMAGE LIMITATION

The Council Tax is a calculated attempt to defuse the momentum of resistance & defiance engendered by the Poll Tax. It was devised to neutralise the advantage to the opposition parties that Ribble Valley demonstrated & which still lingered on during the May Elections in England & Wales.
It is a form of property tax, with 7 bands from 2.5 times a "contribution" for properties above £160,000 assessed value, to the lower end of the house market. Unlike rates, richer people and the extortionate valuation of house prices in the "home counties" are protected. A major slap in the face to the Poll Tax is the removal of people on Income Support, students, student nurses etc. from liability. While one person households (monads) can claim 25% rebates, households over the presumed 2 persons are only penalised if somebody claims Housing Benefit for rent rebate purposes & they are affected by the Non-dependent rules.
The Council Tax is two years away and council services may be decimated by then. Pressure will mount for the Tories to grant an "Amnesty" to those on the 20% level of 'contribution' and if they are forced in this direction for all the "Can't Pays". The struggle against recovery action has to generalise resistance against cuts, thus shortcircuiting the plans of the established parties to "Divide & Rule". Labour may be able to promise a return to Rates as a more immediate means of ending the chaos, but as collaborationists their role in enforcing the Poll Tax will be remembered.

Keith, Ibrox/Cessnock

LOTHIAN FIGHTS ON

Soaring non-payment, an increase in sheriff officer activity and a mobilisation to stop an eviction from a council house - these are highlights of recent anti poll tax activity in Edinburgh and Lothian.

33% of Lothian's Poll Tax income from 1990-91 remained unpaid at 31st March. When you consider the tens of thousands not registered and the disproportionate number of non-payers with rebates, this must mean 40% or more of those eligible are not paying.

Clearly Lothian's sheriff officers are fighting a losing battle. Nevertheless these highly paid mercenaries seem to have stepped up their disgusting activities recently. On 12 April a Stockbridge non-payer alerted the local anti poll tax group that she had just had an unwelcome visit. The first activist on the scene was threatened with violence from the thugs in suits. But as the phone tree was activitated and more anti poll taxers arrived Gray and Scott's men found themselves in difficulties. They had to flee the area, their posh Peugeot hotly pursued by mobile sheriff busters on bikes!

The bad news is that earlier that same day sheriff officers had made a surprise visit to a non-payer in the New Town and managed to intimidate their way into the flat and carry out a poinding. A poinding does not of course mean the non-payer has to pay. A letter to the sheriff clerk and the sheriff officers stating that the non-payer wants the warrant sale to take place in their own home should deter the sheriffs from further action. (Important - it seems that this letter should comply with the form laid down in the Debtors Act (Scotland) Act of Sederunt).

Sheriff door-stepping activity has also been noted in other areas such as Marchmont. Both the Sciennes Marchmont and Stockbridge New Town groups did flyposing blitzes to emphasise the importance of always refusing sheriffs entry and immediately ringing the anti poll tax group.

In Wardieburn, a Council scheme in the north of Edinburgh, a notified poinding was resisted at short notice by a turn-out from friends, neighbours, and the local anti poll tax group. A spate of standard "5 day warning" sheriff officer letters saw the Lothian hot-line - now staffed completely by independent groups - dealing with a spate of calls. Meanwhile in Midlothian the Newtongrange/Mayfield group have been keeping up their spirited resistance to sheriff officers not only in their own area but throughout the District.

To finish this sheriff round-up on a bright note - the Edinburgh branch of HM Love, sheriff officers and Messengers at Arms, are, according to reliable sources, in the process of going bankrupt!

NO POLL TAX - NO EVICTIONS

The attempt to stop a family being evicted from their Council house in Edinburgh on 8 April was an important step in the effort to generalise successful anti poll tax resistance into other areas of social struggle. Front page publicity highlighted a bid by Edinburgh District Council to evict a family, including a man who was HIV positive and two young children, one under school age. The reason? Rent arrears.

A local anti poll tax activist contacted the family, who stayed in a high-rise in the Moredun area. They explained how they were refusing to pay rent as their flat had rain pouring in, and the Council would not carry out the desperately needed repairs. They accepted the offer of support from the Lothian Anti Poll Tax Action, the independent anti poll tax group's network.

The 8 April saw 20 or so activists involved in mounting an all day guard on the flat, while sheriff officers, Council officials, joiners and police lurked in the vicinity. Meanwhile representations were being made to the Council through an independent advice agency. The stand off ended at around 4pm with a brutal police attack by 30 -40 officers. The 7 protestors blocking the flat door were physically dragged away and arrested. The barricaded door was forced and police and sheriffs swarmed in. The family left, the children in tears,

Temporarily re-housed, the family are still facing the threat of another eviction from their new Council flat. The arrested activists were charged with breach of the peace, but released after 4 hours - no doubt due to a noisy 30 strong picket of St Leonards police station. The lessons to be learnt are still being debated, but it is clear that any successful generalisation of the anti poll tax struggle can only be done with real participation on the ground from local communities - city-wide flying squads have their place but there can be no substitute for local involvement.

While attendance at Lothian Federation meetings has fallen from around 100 to 40 or so, the independent groups and networks are holding their own through a problematic period. Lothian Anti Poll Tax Action ran a very successful bus to the London demo on 23 March, and continues to meet monthly. Groups such as Stockbridge and Prestonfield have produced new leaflets to put over the importance of increasing non-payment to win - immediate abolition of the poll tax - the writing off of all poll tax arrears - the reversal of the cuts - the freeing of all poll tax prisoners. Hopefully one famous victory will lead to others!

Mike
(Stockbridge)

News in Brief

HACKNEY FERMENTS

All over the north London borough of Hackney, posters proclaim the addresses & tel. numbers of Local Government Officials & Councillors collaborating in taking people to court. Alarmed at the 'nice' messages they have been receiving, they are trying to prosecute local anti-Poll Tax activists for allegedly printing the helpful info.. In an "unconnected" development squats in Stamford Hill of ex-council property were cleared in dawn raids.Vindictive? Oh - nothing to do with us they squeeled !

POINDINGS RESTART

On 3rd of May there were 5 threatened Poindings in parts of Govan. In Linthouse the rats turned up & had to be rescued by the local polis. This was the same address as the the one displating the banner during the 1915 Rent Strike -"No Surrender: God Help the Sheriff Officers who enter here". Poindings were also prevented by mass nobilisation in Sandyhills & Tollcross. However,without prior notice, Sheriffs forced an entry in a house in Ibrox. Any illusion that the 'battle was over' have been shown to be premature. Keep people informed !

FREE THE MILITANT EIGHT

We unreservedly support the 8 defendents in Glasgow charged with offences such as 'criminal damage' connected with an occupation of a Sheriff Office in 1990. This is a political trial & those accused, including Tommy Sheridan & 'Militant' supporters in Govan & Pollok, are being hounded BECAUSE they engaged in direct action.

THE GEORGE SQ. BUS DISGRACE

Why were a dozen people, anarchists,non-aligned activists & SWP members left stranded in George Sq. on the eve of the London demo on 22nd March? Why were 2 Govanhill activists thrown of the bus when they objected to a half-empty coach from Bell's College touring the square & Militant leaders refusing to let fellow anti poll tax demonstrators on?

LET'S WRITE OUR OWN HISTORY !

Danny Burns one time All-Britain Exec member & leading activist in Bristol, is rushing to bring out a book documenting our history of the anti poll tax victory and example of resistance. It will be non-aligned(unlike Tommy Sheridan's book!) & draw together info supplied by local activists all over Britain. He would like info, with dates if possible, of when your group started,notable events, comments on organising & coping with Organisations & photos,cartoons in leaflets & so on. Rush your contribution to:-
DB c/o Avon APT Federation,
84 Colstone St. BRISTOL.

What Happens Now

warrant sales

Most Sheriff officers say they intend to send 2 letters to non-payers. Some will only send one. They may try to visit you any time.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS:-

DO NOT	Tell them where you work
DO NOT	Tell them where you bank is
DO NOT	Let them into your home

If you know a Sheriff officer is at your door: **don't answer it.**

If you answer, don't let them in.

If they say they will bring the police still refuse them entry.

What if they leave to get the police?

Either: Contact your anti poll tax union and organise a physical barricade outside your home.

Or: Leave your home empty and locked and go to a friend's house.

The Sheriff officers can not force entry into an empty house unless they have given at least 4 days specific notice of their intentions. It can not be a general notice and must give a specific day and date *The Debtors (Scotland) Act 1987,*

- Ring your anti poll tax group so that we know the sheriffs are in the area.
- Move luxury goods out of your house to a friend's before the poinding date. We can help if you would like us to.Move your car well away from your home.
- In the unlikely event of a poinding taking place they can only label luxury goods that belong to you. They are usually only interested in luxury electrical goods like televisions, videos and stereos. A wrongful poinding can be appealed against.
- They cannot take clothing, beds and bedding, fridge and cooker, washing machine, curtains and carpet, tools of your trade, tables and chairs, heaters, settees, toys, lights or fittings.
- If they somehow succeed in poinding something, tell them in writing that you want the warrant sale in your home. Contact us. We can ensure that nothing is bought or sold by anyone.

REMEMBER: The Sheriff officers are ruthless individuals. By agreeing to work for Strathclyde Council they are making a living from the poverty and despair of thousands. They are highly paid professionals when it comes to intimidation and harassment.

They will try to frighten and scare you into debt to pay Thatcher's Poll Tax.

DON'T LET THEM INTIMIDATE YOU!

There are only 191 sheriff officers in Scotland to deal with 1.25 million non-payers. They already have an impossible task. By sticking together and organising peaceful demonstrations to defend anyone threatened by these people we can ensure there are :

NO WARRANT SALES ANYWHERE IN STRATHCLYDE OR SCOTLAND.

Official figure - over 1.2 million summary warrants have been sent out in Scotland.

arresting your wages or benefits

what they can do

- If they can find your employer he or she is legally obliged to comply with the sheriff's demands.
- Wages cannot be arrested at the same time as your bank account is frozen.

Take home pay per week	Maximum amount that can be arrested
£95 - £100	£13
£100 - £105	£14
£105 - £110	£15
£110 - £115	£16

* Students are protesting the arrestment of Tuition Fees throughout Scotland.

- They cannot touch state pensions or student grants.

what you can do

- Don't tell the sheriff where you work and warn your neighbours not to speak to anyone about your business.
- If the sheriff officer does discover where you work, campaign with your fellow workers to pressurise your employer not to comply with the sheriff.
- If there is a rumour at your work about employees being disciplined or sacked over wage arrestments, then contact us. We have campaigned successfully against this in the past.
- If your wages are fully computerised they may have breached the Data Protection Act to arrest your wages. Contact your Union o. local APT.

BENEFIT ARRESTMENTS:

Most state benefits cannot be arrested. Pensions, invalidity allowance, disability and child benefit cannot be touched. Only income support can be arrested. The maximum deductible is £2.00 for a single person and £3.15 for a couple. That is 5% of the benefit. If your money is cut you must appeal against the decision immediately. We have standard appeal letters. So contact us.

freezing your bank account

The Sheriffs do not know where your account is. The banking system is not able to find many people's accounts. So don't tell them your bank. If they find your account, a one-off freeze takes place. Only what is in your account at that time is frozen, 20p or £20. This is put in a suspense account and any money deposited in your account subsequently is not touched.

Keep your account in a different name, get your wages paid into your kid's account. Open a post office account. All this can help avoid arrestment.

what you can do

- Write for more info on opening new accounts & making a 'Bank raid' less likely. You can always move account if the bank 'shops you'.

Scottish contacts

CENTRAL REGION
Stirling 74640/78537
Grangemouth 484344

Borders Fed.(0896)59464*

Grampian -625562/873905.

LOTHIAN REGION:Edinburgh-Fed. Hotline 557-1595
Stockbridge 332-3818/7547
Merchiston 229-9591
Muirhouse 336-5636
Prestonfield 667-2895/9005
Abbeyhill 652-0808/2056
Tollcross 229-6156/0168
Inverlieth 556-0903/6291
Sciennes 229-9552/7720
Southside 228-5273
Claimants Union 557-0718
EAST LOTHIAN-Dunbar 64002
Musselburgh 665-7162/7140
MID LOTHIAN-Penicuik78240
Newtongrange 663-7777
Currie/Balerno 449-5471
Bonnyrigg 660-5074
WEST LOTHIAN-Uphall 855504
Bathgate 630471/52458
Blackburn 54823/630871
Linlithgow 842022
Whitburn 40979/40779

STRATHCLYDE Fed.552-1179
Dennistoun 556-7429
Barrhead 880-5231/7712
Ibrox 427-6398/4433/3691
Spittal/Blairbeth 634-7028
(Codes needed except *)

Govan440-2071/Yoker952-1433
Pollokshields 429-0336/9015
Govanhill 424-0187/0095

ENGLAND & WALES
Avon/Bristol 0272-255504*
Tottenham 081-802-9804 *
Lewisham 081-469-0303 *
T.S.D.C 071-833-8958 *
Swindon 615773
Nottingham 700230/227892
Southampton 556671
Liverpool Wavertree 734-3145
Manchester 428-7783
Leeds 823822/537900
Birmingham 749-3022
Cardiff 340877/237397

SUPPORT THE POLL TAX PRISONERS

Trafalgar Square Defendants' Campaign — PAY NO POLL TAX! — Drop the Charges!

UNCONDITIONAL AMNESTY!

The attempt to discredit the Anti-Poll Tax movement is also a consequence of this state abandoning all pretence at legitimacy; for public order, like "public interest", means a small elite of people using force. But all efforts to smash our communities and con us that we should pay the Tax, have massively backfired. The poverty that means the rich squeezing the poor to line their own pockets, is a form of violence. And after poll tax and violent police charges fail, the last resort that the rich and powerful have, is prison. Lets show them that we will not be beaten with threats of prison, and that we will not forget those of us imprisoned for fighting poll tax. If all the anti-poll tax unions and non-payers can unite so many in non-cooperation, then we can and must campaign for the total amnesty of poll tax prisoners!

POLL TAX STRUGGLE ISN'T OVER YET

The Poll Tax struggle goes on, as we remember the events of last March, two years of non-payment in Scotland one year in Cymru and England, and fourteen million are still not paying! With over one hundred people given custodial sentences, many more receiving other sentences and the continual threats of prison hanging over non-payers, the hated Poll Tax still plagues us. They may have conceded defeat and admitted the Tax is unworkable, but still we cannot afford to pay Reforms? Don't believe the hype!

There are defendants still awaiting trial from the demonstrations of Trafalgar Square and Brixton, last October. Nineteen people are at present in prison and the political show trials are continuing.Time and time again the blatant attempts by the police to fake evidence have been exposed. At a trial where the jury took the almost unprecedented step of halting a trial, the police prosecution tried to block evidence of a savage attack upon the defendant, claiming "its disclosure **would not be in the public interest**". In whose interest is it to cover up police assaults on demonstrators?

At the Brixton prison picket, many of us saw an unashamed act of revenge by the Metropolitan Police for Trafalgar Square, in which police surrounded, and charged Three thousand peaceful demonstrators. A PC was heard to say "**I don't know what I'm arresting him for**", to which the reply was, "Arrest him for assault on PC".During the trials when police were asked what a snatch squad was; they had to admit that "we were briefed before the demo to go into the crowd and arrest anybody".

MET. POLICE REPORT BACKFIRES

Finally we have seen the Met.Police produce a shabby report, which glosses over all the brutalities of Trafalgar Square, yet has to admit that the deliberate tactic driving at crowds provokes people into an angry response and that the riot was spontaneous. Which is another way of admitting that they provoked the battle of Trafalgar! We know that the police acted as politically as do the makers of the poll tax. The main purpose of the report seems to be to justify more police control of popular protest, to look for credibility three weeks before the next Poll Tax march.

PRISONERS LIST

HMP Wandsworth, Heathfield Rd., Wandsworth, London SW18 3HS.

Paul Jacob RA0711, EDR Nov 92
Daniel Attwood KT1303, EDR May91
Brian Taveres MV3239, EDR Nov 92
Timothy Donaghy MW0105, EDR Jan 93
Darren Healey RA2183, EDR Sept 92
Adrian Pugh RC0627, EDR June 91
Maertin Benfield PF2678
James Attwood MW0834
Neil Bremner MW0316

HMP Pentonville, Caledonian Rd. London N7 8TT.

Alan Clarke MV2254
Michael Neal MV3973

HMP Highpoint, Stradishall, Newmarket, Suffolk

Robert Robinson RA0741
Tim Paine NW0231, EDR Dec 91

HMYOI Huntercome, Huntercome Place, Nuffield, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon RG9

Wayne Calder NT0082, EDR March 92

HMP Standford Hill, Eastchurch, Sheerness, Kent ME12 4AA

Neil Armour MV3338, EDR June 91

HMP Ford, Ford near Arundel, West Sussex, BN18 0BX

Zachary Osbourne MV0245 EDR May91

*EDR - Earliest date of release.

REFUSE AND RESIST

Due to a lack of funds, the R & R team decided that R & R would have to fold after issue no. 6. However, the overwhelming response to that idea was that the paper had too important a role to play in the campaign to allow this to happen. So, this special, shortened edition was produced in the hope that we can raise enough funds to continue.

It is being proposed that R & R becomes the voice of the Scottish Anti-Poll Tax Action, with both funding and all the editorial work being the shared responsibility of all anti-Poll Tax groups.

If you want R & R to continue PLEASE send donations (on a regular basis if possible) and participate in the work of editing, mailing etc. if you can.

Margaret Murray

INDEPENDENT ACTION

Scottish Anti Poll Tax Action is developing our fight from defeating the poll tax to resisting cuts & debt enforcement. The 4th Forum was held in Edinburgh on 11th May 1991. Help coordinate resistance,contact:- CR, 11 Forth St.,Edinburgh EH1

CONTACTS

All articles, letters and donations to:-

P.O.Box 239
Glasgow G3 6RA.

STOP PRESS: For last minute information or details of events requiring coverage by the editorial team call - 041 422 8675 or 427 6398